■ ENTERTAINMENT / A2-2

PDI gets exclusive 35-min. peek at this year's most-talked-about movie

■ ACROSS / A21

Guinsaugon becoming top tourist destination in Southern Leyte

■ BUSINESS / B2-4

Credit card firm introduces concierge services and other perks to pamper rich

■ NEWS / A2

Senate presidency up in the air

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Friday, May 12, 2006 ★★ 10 sections / Vol. 21 / No. 153 P18 website: www.inq7.net

3 out of 5 youths think they're immune to AIDS

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

AS MANY AS THREE OUT OF EVERY FIVE YOUNG persons (aged 14 to 20) believe they are immune from HIV/AIDS, and one in five thinks that the virus can be contracted by kissing, drinking contaminated water, or being bitten by a mosquito.

These were some of the "disturbing" findings in a survey conducted recently by the Department of Health, prompting the agency to scramble for

3 OUT OF 5/ A23

'Tis the feast day for single women seeking true love

By Nancy C. Carvajal

TODAY'S THE DAY FOR single women to seek help in finding their one true love.

Much like the way childless couples dance in Obando, Bulacan, to beg

'TIS/ A11

MALILITO N'YAN SI CUPIDO!

2 more leftists shot dead

Bayan Muna members killed in 5 years hit 91

By Villamor Visaya Jr.
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

ECHAGUE, ISABELA—Two Bayan Muna members in Cagayan Valley were shot and killed by unidentified men here on Wednesday night in an attack that the activists' colleagues said was part of military attempts to muzzle antigovernment groups.

The military denied involvement in the killings.

Elena Mendiola, 54, Bayan Muna-Cagayan Valley secretary general, and her live-in partner, Ricardo Balauag, 51, had just bought mangoes in Barangay Garit Sur and were about to leave the village at 9:30 p.m. when two men fired at them with an M-14 rifle and a .45-cal. pistol.

Mendiola was hit six times in the head, while Balauag was hit in the head and body.

It was the second assassination attempt on Mendiola in less than 24 hours.

Unidentified men earlier fired at her in front of her house in Barangay Silauan Sur, but she was unscathed.

The victims were the 90th and 91st members of the militant party-list group killed since April 2001, according to Robert de Castro, Bayan Muna national deputy secretary general.

The two were also the 12th and 13th victims of political killings under the Arroyo administration, he said.

"We condemn the cowardly act perpetrated by agents of the state. Only the military has reason to silence the voices of truth and change," Castro said.

Catholic Bishop Sergio Utleg of Isabela condemned the murder and described the killers as "evil and narrow-minded armed government forces."

Reginald Ugaddan, Bayan-Cagayan Valley spokesperson, said some witnesses were willing to testify on the killing but were afraid to do so because of lack of protection for them.

2 MORE/ A7

IT'S MORNING IN MANILA. Eight nuns on board a ferry in Manila greet a new day with prayers of thanksgiving and for a safe passage to Culion, Palawan, to join the town's centennial festivities starting April 29. The religious have played a major role in caring for the sick in the country's first leper colony. Through the tireless efforts of its former residents, Culion is now a municipality. MARICAR ABIS/EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT TO PDI PRESIDENT

CBCP: Make public Mayuga, fertilizer scam reports

By Leila B. Salaverria

AS PHILIPPINE BISHOPS YESterday lauded the Supreme Court's landmark decisions on President Macapagal-Arroyo's apparent drift toward authoritarian rule, they also urged her to come clean on the alleged fertilizer scam and the controversial "Mayuga report."

Not letting up on issues hounding the administration, the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines said the investigation by Rear Admiral Mateo Mayuga into the military's role in the alleged manipulating of the 2004 election should be made public.

CBCP officials, at a news conference celebrating 2006 as the "Year of Social Concerns," also said the alleged misuse by the Department of Agriculture of the P700-million fertilizer fund should be litigated in the proper forum.

Archbishop Angel Lagdameo, the CBCP president, read from a Pastoral Exhortation that said there was a need to restore trust in political institutions "perceived by many to be corrupt."

Lagdameo commended the Supreme Court for its decisions striking down portions of con-

CBCP/ A10

Doubts raised over population drop report

By Philip C. Tubeza and Michelle V. Remo

A LAWMAKER YESTERDAY SAID the report that the Philippines' annual population growth rate slowed down to 1.95 percent last year was "highly unbelievable."

Cavite Rep. Gilbert Remulla, a vice chair of the Philippine Legislators Committee on Population and Development Foundation Inc., said yesterday's headline story in the INQUIRER was "misleading" because it was based on "a mere projection."

"How can you say it is factual?" said Remulla, a leading proponent of House Bill No. 3773, or the Responsible Parenthood and Population Management Act.

Remulla said the National Statistical Coordination Board (NSCB) had only issued a projection, based on the 2000 census, that population growth could slow to 1.95 percent between 2005 and 2010.

He said there was no census taken last year because the National Statistics Office lacked the

DOUBTS/ A22

Gov't agency printing tons of Cha-cha literature

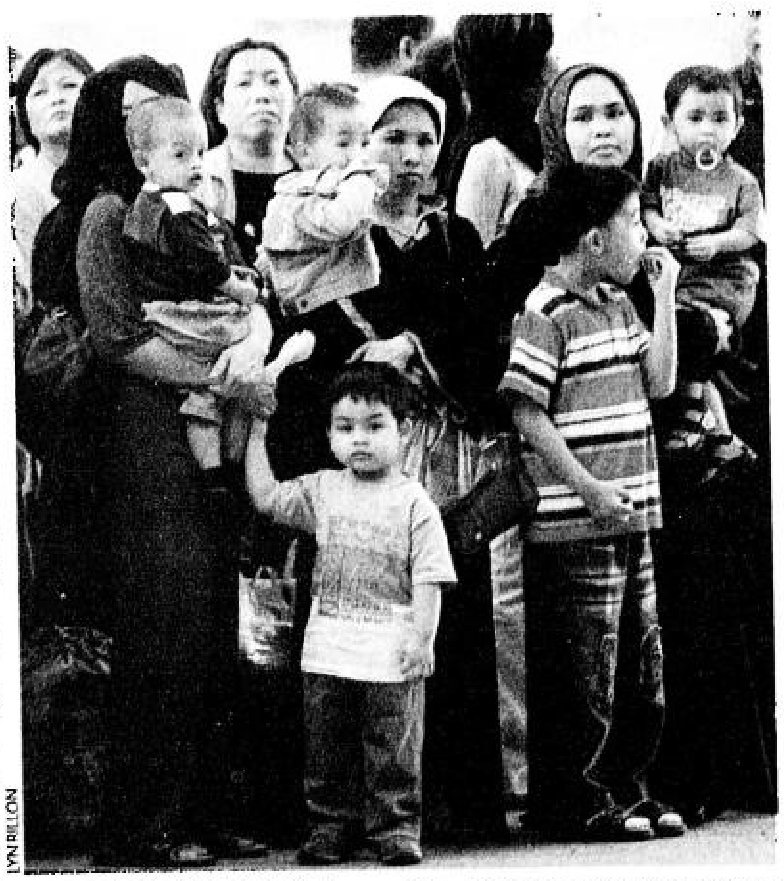
By TJ Burgonio

THE NATIONAL PRINTING OFfice has been printing primers on Charter change by the hundreds of thousands at Malacañang's request, raising questions about the possible misuse of government funds.

An insider showed the INQUIRER samples of the material, titled "Primer on Charter change," including one bearing the name of the Philippine Information Agency on the front and back covers, and indicating that this was published by the agency.

The later copies did not contain the same information, apparently owing to the controversy

GOV'T/ A23



LYN RILLON

FROM SAUDI WITH LOVE: Some of the 170 overseas Filipino workers pardoned by Saudi King Abdullah arrive at Villamor Air Base.

GMA trip to Saudi called major coup

By Nikko Dizon

MANY WERE VISIBLY EXCITED. Others were simply relieved. Not a few shed tears. But nearly all were undeniably happy to be home.

A total of 170 overseas Filipino workers arrived in Manila late yesterday from Jeddah. They were among the estimated 300 OFWs languishing in Saudi jails for various offenses who were pardoned by King Abdullah during the recent four-day state visit of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

The group arrived at 4:55 p.m. at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Naia) via Saudi Airlines flight SV 862 under an arrangement personally ordered by the king.

An hour and a half later, they were ferried in three huge airport buses to the presidential hangar at Villamor Air Base to meet Ms Arroyo.

The President, who flew home separately yesterday, presided over a Cabinet meeting at the air base shortly after her arrival.

There, she announced that the Saudi king and crown prince had told her the Arab kingdom would invest heavily in the Philippines because they believed "in my political will to bring about stability and economic continuity in our policies."

She said that Saudi Aramco, through Petron, would study the feasibility of refining oil in Mindanao, noting that oil refineries cost $1 billion. She also said that Aramco would push ahead with a $300 million investment in a

GMA TRIP/ A10

SUMMER'S END: With the expected coming of a tropical depression, the end may be in sight for beach revelers and other sizzlers, including these Russian tourists lazing on the sands of Puka Beach in Boracay, Aklan. ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

Storm 'Caloy' roars toward Samar

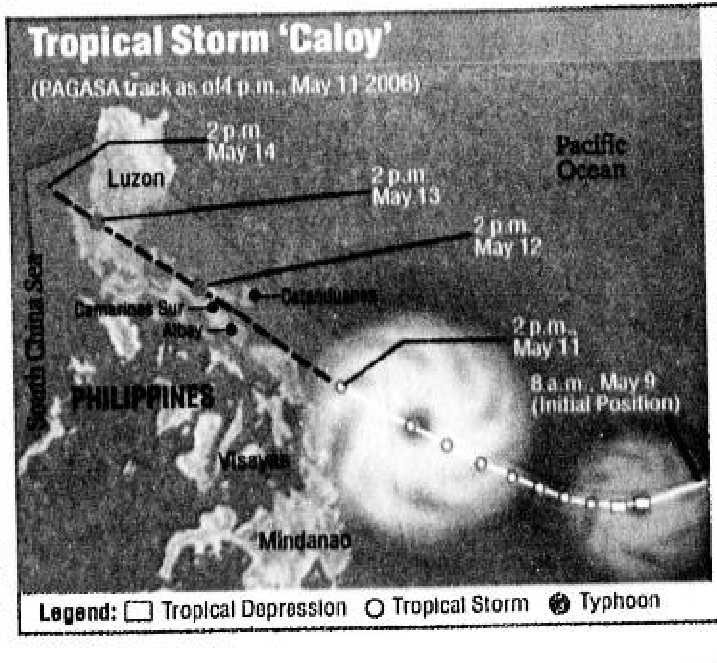
By Blanche S. Rivera

TROPICAL STORM "CALOY" roared toward Samar in Eastern Visayas and provinces in the Bicol region, leaving thousands stranded at key ferry crossings and triggering official warnings of landslides and flash floods.

Packing maximum sustained winds of 95 kph near the center and gustiness of up to 120 kph, Caloy (international code name: Chanchu) was spotted yesterday afternoon 140 km northeast of Guiuan, Eastern Samar, or 230 km east southeast of Catarman, Northern Samar.

The storm was moving west northwest at 19 kph toward eastern Luzon and is expected to

STORM/ A10



Location of eye/center – At 4 p.m. Thursday, the center was estimated at 140 km NE of Guiuan, Eastern Samar or 230 km east southeast of Catarman, Northern Samar (11.9°N, 126°E)

Strength
Maximum sustained winds of 95 kph near the center and gustiness of up to 120 kph

Signal No. 2
Catanduanes, Albay, Sorsogon including Burias and Ticao Island and Camarines provinces

INQMAP: ERNIE SAMBO

Second FRONT PAGE
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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Bicol region and Eastern Visayas will experience stormy weather. The rest of Visayas and Southern Luzon will have rains and gusty winds and the coastal waters along these areas will be moderate to rough. The rest of the country will be mostly cloudy with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms.

COMPILED BY KATE PEDROSO, PDI RESEARCH/05/11/06 SOURCE PAGASA

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Rains
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Rains
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Stormy
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Stormy	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

Senate presidency up in the air

By TJ Burgonio

SENATE MINORITY LEADER Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said yesterday he doubted anybody in the chamber could muster the required votes to topple Senate President Franklin Drilon from his post, and Majority Leader Francis Pangilinan and Sen. Richard Gordon said they shared this view.

DRILON

VILLAR

Notwithstanding the term-sharing agreement between Drilon and Sen. Manuel Villar Jr., the issue of who will lead the Senate would boil down to who has command of the magic number, the 13 votes needed to elect a new Senate president, according to Pimentel.

"No party or group in the Senate has the votes to elect a new Senate president," Pimentel said in a statement issued from Kenya where he, Drilon and Sen. Panfilo Lacson are attending an Inter-Parliamentary Union conference.

"Drilon has maybe 5 senators; Villar, 4; opposition 7; and unidentified flying objects, 7. The Senate presidency is anybody's ball game," he added.

Thus, if nobody could muster the minimum votes to wrest control of the Senate leadership in the 23-member chamber, the status quo would prevail, Pimentel said.

The opposition is not keen on rocking the leadership since Drilon, who had broken away from President Macapagal-Arroyo, has led inquiries into alleged administration anomalies and set the tone for the chamber's critical stance vis-a-vis the administration.

"I have no reason to believe Senate President Franklin Drilon is in danger of losing his post when we resume sessions on the 15th of May," Pangilinan said in a separate statement.

Gordon said that while the term-sharing agreement between Drilon and Villar can be challenged by anyone, he could not say if any senator has the numbers "right now."

"I suppose it will be up to Frank (whether to yield the Senate presidency now)," Gordon added.

At the opening of the 13th Congress in July 2004, Drilon and Villar agreed to split the three-year term, with Drilon serving as Senate president during the first and second regular sessions and Villar taking over after that.

Drilon maintains he would honor the pact with Villar, but Senators Juan Ponce Enrile, Manuel "Mar" Roxas II and Gordon stated recently that they were not bound by that agreement. Any proposed change in the Senate leadership, especially when 13th Congress' third regular session opens in July, will have to be voted on by members of the Senate.

Villar, chair of the committee on finance, sidestepped anew the leadership issue and instead issued a statement vowing to speed up the passage of the P1.053-trillion national budget when Congress resumes sessions next week.

"We are almost half-way through May and yet the budget for this year is still not approved. In two months or so, the national budget for 2007 would already be presented. So it would really be ridiculous if by then, the 2006 budget is still up in the air," he said.

After months of delay, the House approved a P1.04-trillion budget on April 4, the eve of Congress' Lenten break. Since then, congressmen and Malacañang have been pressing the Senate to pass the measure.

Villar said senators, who had held hearings on the budget since last November, should not be blamed for the delay.

"When the budget was handed to us, there was no opportunity to convene a bicameral conference anymore because the recess had begun."

With Juliet Labog-Javellana

'It's check and balance, not obsession to oust'

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

SENATORS YESTERDAY DEFENDED THEIR chamber from a House leader's allegation that the solons were only obsessed with ousting President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Dropping any parliamentary courtesy, House Majority Floor Leader Prospero Nograles had called the Senate a "national fault-finding" body, after the senators announced they were resuming their investigation of the "Hello Garci" wiretap and other administration anomalies when Congress resumed sessions on Monday.

Echoing Malacañang, Nograles had said the Senate investigations were nothing but attempts to undermine Ms Arroyo's leadership.

Yesterday, some senators hit back.

"There's an ocean of difference between acting as a check and balance on the executive department and wanting to oust GMA," said Senate Majority Leader Francis Pangilinan.

Pangilinan said the Senate would concentrate on passing the much-delayed P1-trillion 2006 national budget.

But Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. insisted: "It's part of the Senate's job to seek an end to the corrupt administration."

"That is why Gloria should resign now so that we can have snap elections," said Pimentel, a staunch Arroyo critic who has been calling on her to resign amid allegations she cheated in the May 2004 elections.

Sen. Richard Gordon said that instead of meddling in the Senate's affairs, Nograles should be grateful to its members for working to get some restrictions of Executive Order No. 464 lifted.

Senators were among those who questioned the constitutionality of EO 464 before the Supreme Court, which subsequently nullified portions of the order that had barred administration and security officials from appearing at congressional hearings without the President's approval.

"We (senators) are obsessed with protecting the rights of the people. Obviously, Nograles is only interested in protecting the President," said Gordon.

Gordon said he understood Nograles' predicament where he needed to court the President's support for projects in his district to keep him in power.

He said Nograles apparently was unaware that the Senate worked on important bills even during the Holy Week break.

He cited the hearings conducted by the ways and means committee, chaired by Sen. Ralph Recto, and the committee on constitutional amendments, which he chairs.

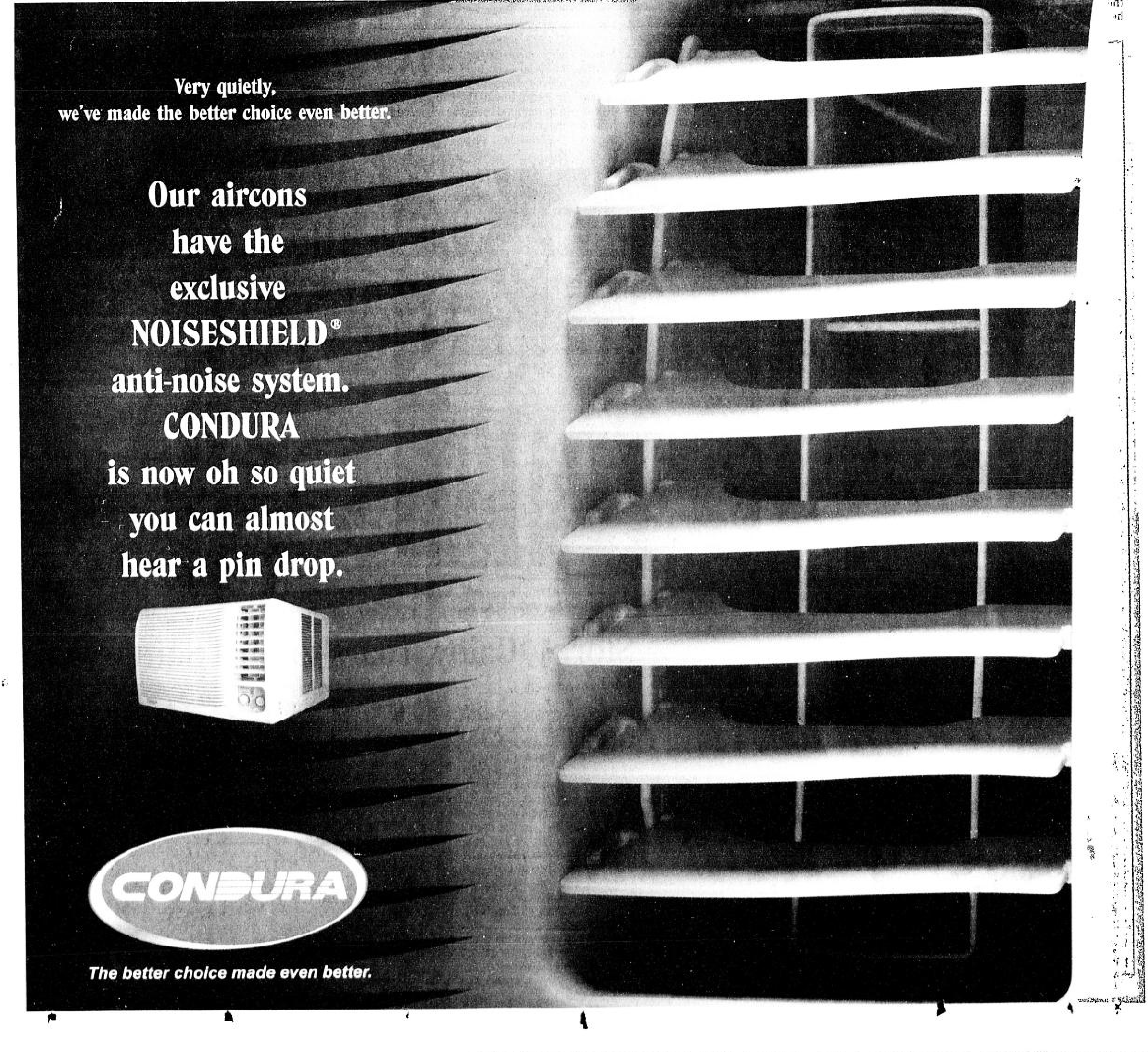
Recto's committee held a hearing on the reduction of the income tax, the rationalization of fiscal incentives and measures to curb smuggling.

Although these were Malacañang-endorsed measures, two Cabinet secretaries and a bureau head snubbed the hearing.

Sen. Manuel Villar, finance committee chair, said the Senate will concentrate on getting the 2006 national budget passed after the House of Representatives took eight months to approve and transmit it to the upper chamber.

"As far as the Senate is concerned, we have not been remiss in our duty to hasten the approval of the budget," Villar said.

He said the Senate committee of the whole had conducted parallel marathon hearings alongside the House hearings since the third quarter of last year.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Senator threatens 'zero budget' for PCGG

By TJ Burgonio

SEN. JUAN PONCE Enrile yesterday recommended a P1 budget for the Presidential Commission on Good Government after its chair, Camilo Sabio, and two commissioners skipped the Senate inquiry into the dissipation of assets of the Philcomsat Holdings Corp. (PHC).

Sabio and Commissioners William Dichoso and Ricardo Abcede invoked Sec. 4-B of Executive Order No. 1, which created PCGG, to avoid the first hearing by the committee on government corporations and enterprises which saw a face-off of the opposing factions of the PHC shareholders.

The provision states that no staff of the commission shall be required to testify or produce evidence concerning matters "within its official cognizance."

"I would like to state for the record, I'm going to move for a zero budget of the PCGG," Enrile declared at the start of the hearing.

He is one of the founding shareholders of the mother firm, Philippine Communications Satellite Corp. (Philcomsat).

The senator had earlier recommended a similar allocation for the commission after Sabio refused to answer senators' questions on the coco levy funds during the committee of the whole budget hearings in January.

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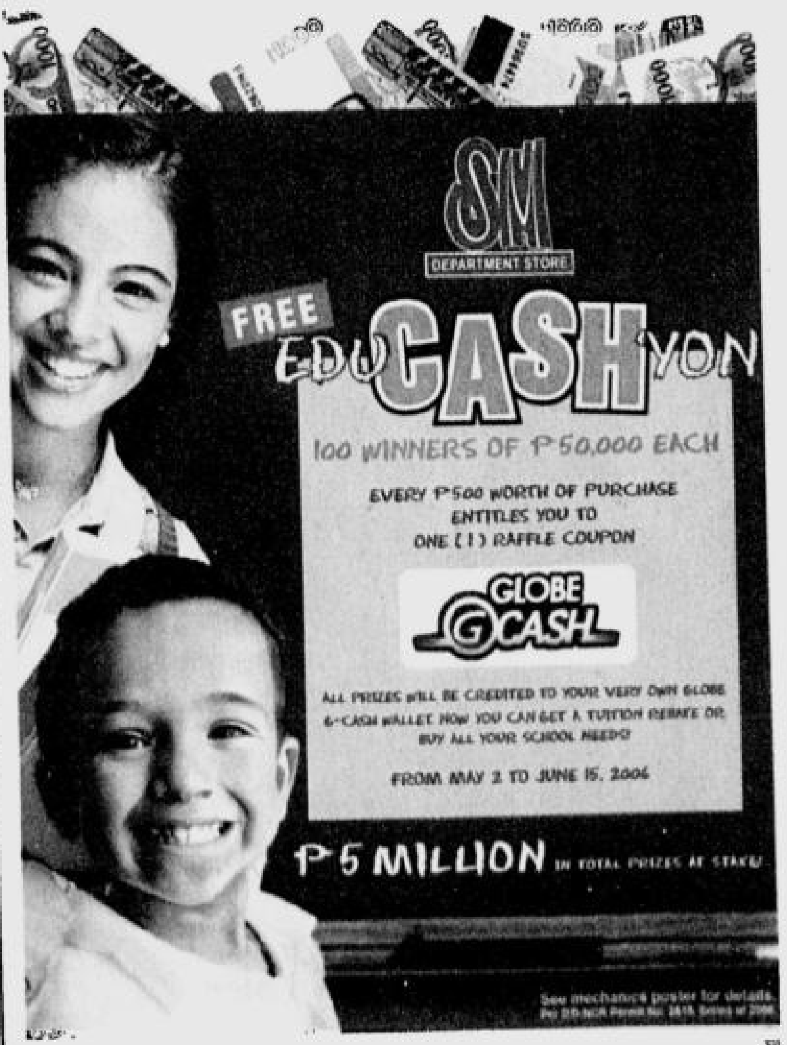

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Corrections

IN THE MAY 10 ISSUE, one of the front-page windows misstated that the country's farm output is expected to grow by 5 percent in the first quarter of the year. The 5-percent growth projected by the Department of Agriculture is for the first half of the year. The accompanying Business story on Page B6 also had an erroneous drophead. It should have read: "Agricultural production"—not reduction—"up 3.9% in Q1, helped by big corn, rice harvests, DA says."

* * *

IN THE MAY 10 ISSUE, a story on the Second Front Page—"Palace names 4 new justices to appeals court"—misspelled the name of one of the appointees to the Court of Appeals. The correct name of the new associate justice is Sixto—not Sixth—Marella Jr.

* * *

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to the Day Desk, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Mascardo Street, Makati City, fax Nos. 897-47-93/94; e-mail address: daydesk@inquirer.com.ph.

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Erap dares GMA, Chavit to rat on each other

By Nelson F. Flores

FORMER PRESIDENT JOSEPH ESTRADA yesterday dared President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson to tell on each other so the people may know the truth.

Estrada made the taunt in a statement issued from his villa in Tanay, Rizal. Singson threatened to withdraw support from Ms Arroyo in the event her government enters into a deal with Estrada and the toppled leader is acquitted of plunder charges.

"Perhaps Governor Singson has personal knowledge of large-scale anomalies involving Mrs. Arroyo and that's why he is threatening to leave her side in the event I am acquitted by the antigraft court," the 69-year old Estrada said.

He said Singson "should make good on his wish to be remembered as a man who told the truth by revealing all he knows on these anomalies, including the alleged jueteng links of both First Gentleman Jose Miguel 'Mike' Arroyo and eldest son Rep. Juan Miguel 'Mikey' Arroyo."

On the other hand, Estrada said if Ms Arroyo has nothing to hide, she should file the appropriate charges against Singson as recommended by the National Bureau of Investigation for his accumulated cash advances on the tobacco excise tax incurred from the administration of former President Fidel V. Ramos up to her own.

Singson said over dinner at the INQUIRER office on Monday that he would go against Ms Arroyo if Estrada were acquitted by the Sandiganbayan of the P4-billion plunder charge leveled against him following his ouster in 2001.

"The case is so strong. The only way he can be acquitted is if there's a deal," the 64-year-old Singson said.

He said he would also oppose Ms Arroyo if her administration obtained Estrada's release on recognizance as proposed by Presidential Chief of Staff Michael Defensor. Estrada remains under house arrest at his villa in Tanay pending completion of his trial.

The former chief executive said he would never enter into any deals with Malacañang just to obtain his liberty.

"My innocence and integrity are non-negotiable. I will see this trial through and continue to pray that justice is done," he added.

Estrada said Singson was simply running true to form as an alleged blackmailer when he threatened to withdraw support from Ms Arroyo.

"I have personally experienced the vindictiveness of Singson and am now detained as a result of my refusal to give in to his blackmail. But despite five years in detention, I would not have it any other way ... I would still refuse to give in to his demands despite the fate that awaits me," Estrada said.

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and AWARDING OF THE WINNERS OF THE INTER-UNIVERSITY DEBATE COMPETITION

'HEIGHT OF HYPOCRISY'

GMA House allies slam 'kangaroo court' verdict

By Philip C. Tubeza

CONGRESSIONAL ALLIES OF PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday denounced as the "height of hypocrisy" the "guilty" verdict against the President handed down by the so-called people's court set up by her political and civil society opponents.

The Citizens' Congress for Truth and Accountability (CCTA) was a "kangaroo court" and its proceedings "an obvious politically partisan endeavor" that usurped the powers of the Presidential Electoral Tribunal to investigate allegations of fraud in the 2004 elections, said Representatives Monico Puentevella and Exequiel Javier of the ruling Lakas-CMD.

They said the CCTA, which had set up a 15-person tribunal to "try" the President, had also usurped Congress' authority to declare a President guilty of culpable violation of the Constitution and to have her impeached.

"None of the CCTA's findings will stand in court and Congress because in the first place the so-called people's court has no legal authority to prosecute anyone," Puentevella said in a statement.

Anti-GMA partisans

"As everyone knows, the CCTA is a partisan group of anti-Arroyo personalities who are bent on ousting the President," the Bacolod congressman added.

After a month-long "investigation and trial," the CCTA on Wednesday released its verdict finding the President "guilty" of electoral fraud, human rights violations and graft and corruption.

Puentevella said it was "absurd and pathetic" that a group of "strange bedfellows assumed a semblance of legitimacy by invoking the name of the people who never gave them the mandate to try the President on baseless charges of poll fraud, corruption and rights abuse."

Javier said the CCTA members were being presumptuous because the group as well as their "mock trial" had no legal authority.

'Bogus court'

"The trial was make-believe because they are a bogus court. They know they cannot win in a real court or in an impeachment proceeding so they resorted to a pseudo court to console themselves," he said.

Aside from lacking legal authority, the CCTA also had no "credibility because those who compose the group are recycled and overused anti-Arroyo personalities," he said.

"The CCTA is led by former Vice President [Teofisto] Guingona whose political principles seem to go with whichever is politically popular and beneficial for his name. His 'I accuse' speech ignited the hell for Erap [deposed President Estrada], but now he's rubbing elbows with the Estradas," he said.

Javier said the public was "very much aware" of Guingona's flip-flops, including his resignation from his ambassadorial post.

"The Arroyo administration gave him a position but he jumped out of the ship before anyone else when things got too hot for him. He should learn how to fade away gracefully," the congressman from Antique said.

RP to benefit from Australia's antiterror aid

THE PHILIPPINES WILL BE A "KEY RECIPIent" of Australia's recently approved counterterrorism package for Asia in the next four years, the Australian Embassy announced yesterday.

Worth 92.6 million Australian dollars (US$71.6 million), the package is designed to boost the capacity of recipient countries, including the Philippines, to combat the continuing and evolving threat of terrorism, the mission said in a statement.

The embassy did not indicate amounts specific to the Philippines, but said the package would build on existing cooperation agreements and translate into the following:

- Increased training in basic investigation, specialist law enforcement, forensics, and technical training by the Australian Federal Police.
- Greater information-sharing and exchange of border-control expertise. This includes support for the Regional Movement Alert List system initiative endorsed by Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (Apec) leaders in 2005 to promote "mutual access" to passport database systems.
- Collaborative efforts to strengthen regional controls on chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear materials.
- Activities that promote tolerance and counteract terrorist propaganda.

The embassy's Chargé d'Affaires, Pablo Kang, said these measures would be explored further with the Philippine government during bilateral counterterrorism consultations next month.

"These measures are a further manifestation of Australia's long-term commitment to peace and development in the Philippines," the mission said.

On Tuesday, Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz told reporters in Kuala Lumpur that the two countries are close to signing a security pact allowing Australian troops to be stationed in the Philippines, albeit temporarily.

Such an accord would allow Australian servicemen to participate in military exercises with troops from the United States, with whom the Philippines has military agreements.

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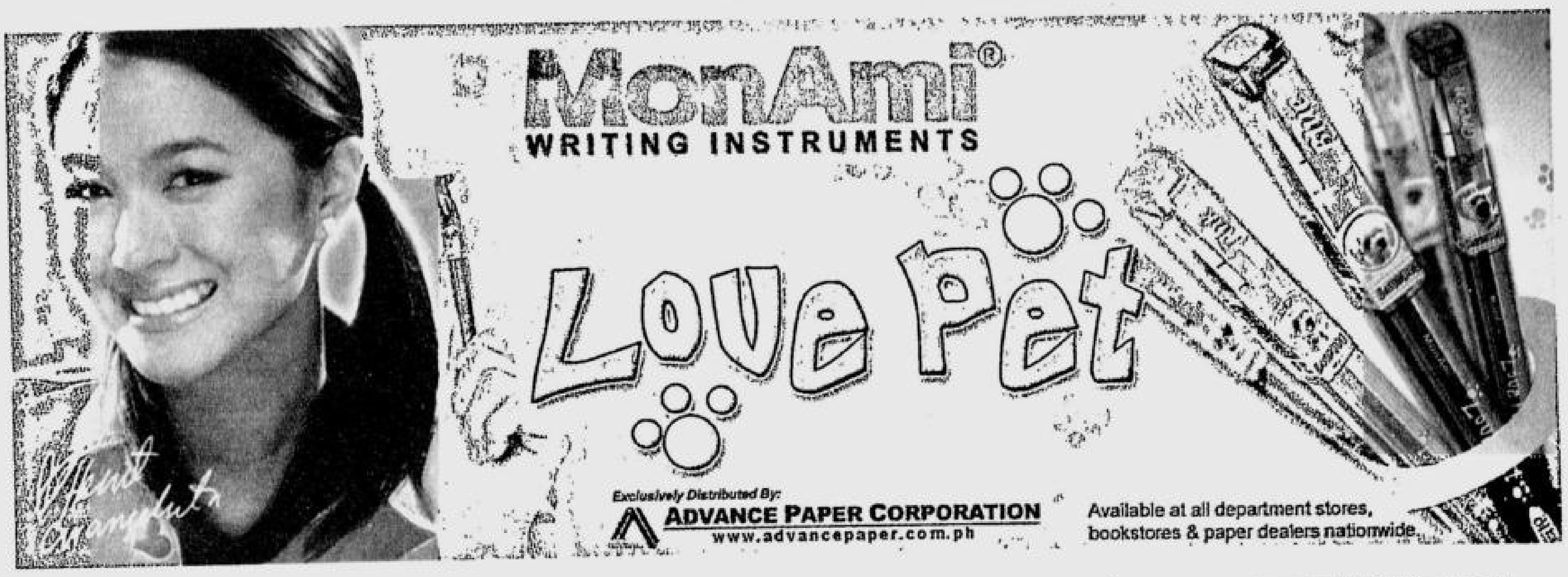
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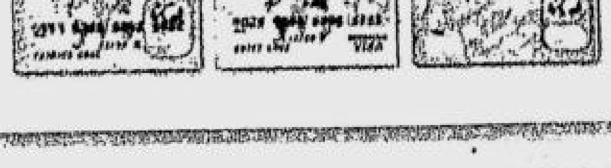

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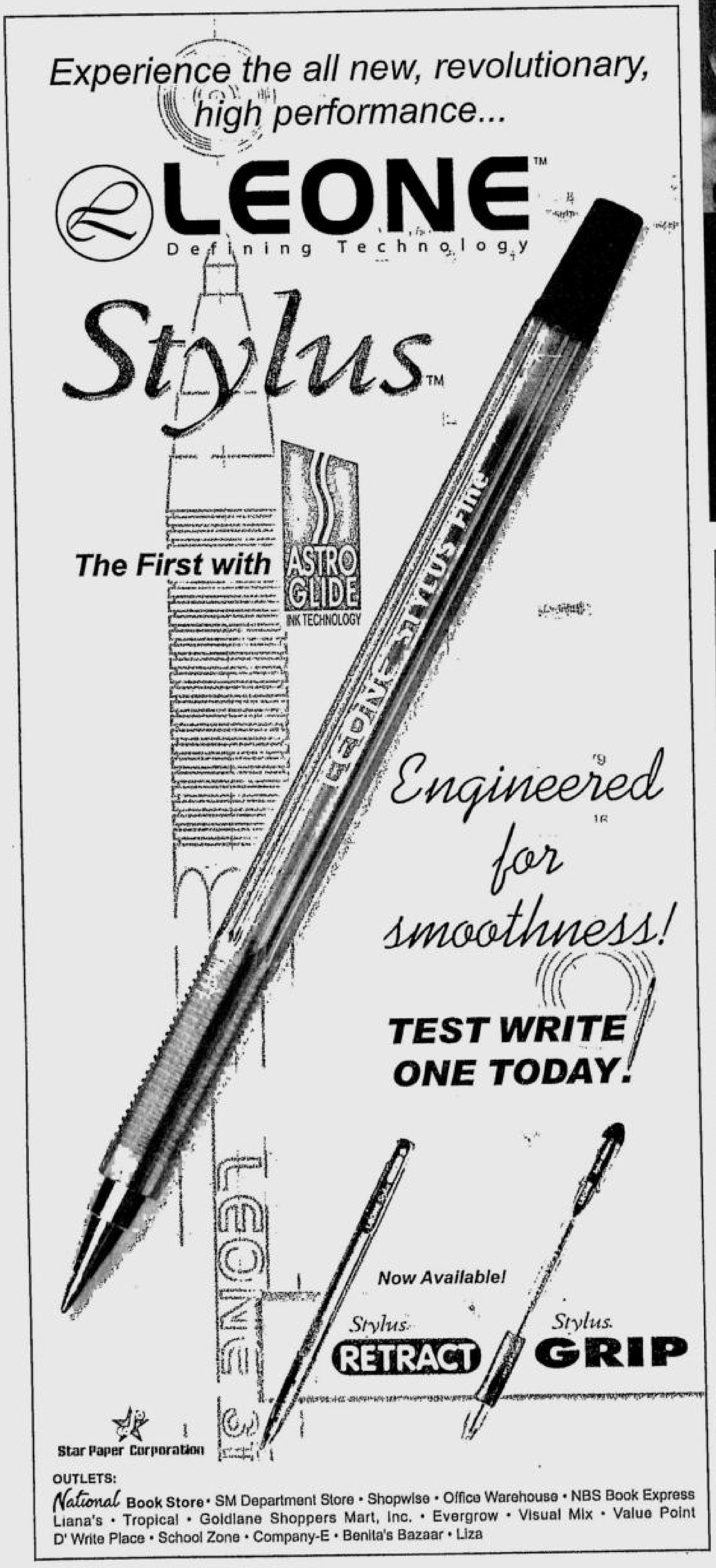

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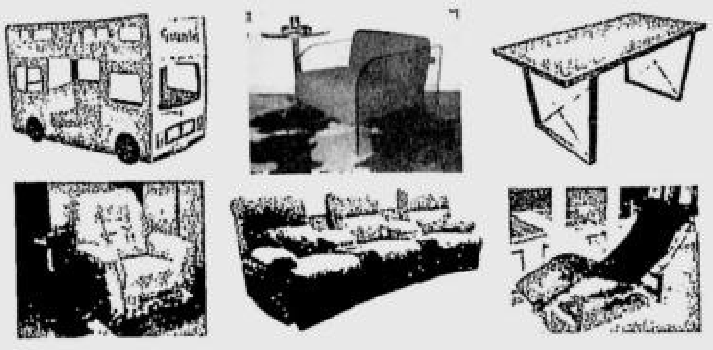

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Mark Jimenez registers in new district, sparks talk of comeback

By Tina G. Santos

IS MILLIONAIRE, EX-CONVICT MARK Jimenez, who once warmed a seat in Congress, thinking of making a comeback?

Jimenez yesterday went to the Commission on Elections (Comelec) office in Manila to file an application for transfer of residence from the city's sixth to its fifth district, according to election officer Raymond Teaño.

"He said he wanted to vote in the place where he was born," Teaño said, when asked if Jimenez disclosed any intention to run again for public office.

Teaño added that Jimenez's application for transfer would have to go through a process, including approval by the election registration board.

Sources believe that the move of the 59-year-old former representative of Manila's sixth district was a clear indication that he planned to run in the next elections.

Jimenez lost his seat on a question of residency. The House of Representatives Electoral Tribunal unseated Jimenez in May 2003, acting favorably on a complaint filed by a losing candidate, Bienvenido Abante, and Rosenda Ann Ocampo, the daughter of Pablo Ocampo, former congressman of the city. The two questioned Jimenez's claim of residency in Manila as he lived in Forbes Park.

In November 2003, Jimenez was convicted by a United States court on tax evasion and election fraud charges.

The Southern District Court of Miami sentenced Jimenez to 27 months in prison after he pleaded guilty to election conspiracy and tax evasion charges. He was also ordered to pay $1.2 million in fines.

Jimenez started serving his sentence on Jan. 5, 2004 as approved by the Miami court which considered his birthday on Dec. 31 and the Christmas holidays.

He was "voluntarily" extradited to the United States on Dec. 26, 2002, after a long legal struggle that involved petitions before the Supreme Court. *With PDI research*

Ermita draws flak for Da Vinci movie remark

By Philip C. Tubeza

IF YOU OPEN YOUR mouth on an issue regarding religion, especially one that's sensitive, you'd better expect a quick counterpunch.

This is exactly what Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita got after saying that the movie, "The Da Vinci Code," was blasphemous and that it ought to be banned—an opposition lawmaker quickly advised him to just shut up.

Iloilo Rep. Rolex Suplico said yesterday that Ermita's statement put the Movie Television Review and Classification Board (MTRCB) in a "very awkward position."

"It may serve the country well if the Executive Secretary, whose every utterance can be interpreted as state policy since he is the first alter ego of the President, to keep himself to civil matters, leaving the sacred and the divine to the religious," Suplico said.

"We wish to remind the Palace that every public servant took an oath to protect and defend the Constitution, including the provision saying that 'the separation of Church and the State shall be inviolable,'" he said.

Suplico said the provision meant that the government was proscribed from commenting on religious policies.

Ermita on Wednesday said that Malacanang would not lift a finger to stop the showing of the "The Da Vinci Code," but if he had his way the movie would not be played in Philippine theaters because it was "blasphemous."

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2 more leftists shot dead in ambush

From page A1

He said the nonprosecution of perpetrators had created "a culture of impunity and violence."

Officials of the Army's 5th Infantry Division based in Jones town denied any involvement in the killings.

"It is just convenient for them [activists] to blame the military. It is unfair. They must have to verify first before accusing us," Col. Hilario Atendido, 502nd Infantry Brigade commander, said in a text message to the INQUIRER.

The military considers Bayan Muna and other leftist groups fronts for the Communist Party of the Philippines and its armed wing, the New People's Army (NPA).

The CPP-NPA has been waging a Maoist rebellion since 1969, making it Asia's longest running communist insurgency.

In February, Ms Arroyo invoked emergency powers to quash what she claimed was a coup plot by the communists and disgruntled military officers.

Defender of farmers' rights

Mendiola led several Bayan Muna protests against the Arroyo administration in Cagayan Valley. She actively supported the campaign to increase the buying price of rice and corn produced by farmers.

Ugaddan described Mendiola, a member of the People's Alliance for Democracy, Justice and Good Governance, as a "popular defender of farmers' rights" in Isabela.

"Any further investigation must work to establish who is responsible for this killing and bring the perpetrators to justice. The government must take a proactive role to ensure the citizens are protected," Utleg said.

Killing, disappearance

Earlier, Jeremias Tinambacan, a member of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines, was killed in Misamis Occidental on May 9, according to the human rights group Karapatan. His wife, Rev. Marilou Tinambacan, was wounded.

The group also reported the disappearance early this week of Philip Limjoco, a suspected New People's Army rebel and listed as one of those to be arrested during the state of national emergency declared by Ms Arroyo in February. His family has said Limjoco is not involved in the leftist movement in the country.

The attacks came in the wake of the Citizens' Congress for Truth Accountability's findings that Ms Arroyo had committed serious human rights violations because of the extrajudicial killings.

Karapatan has listed more than 560 deaths of leftwing activists since 2001.

The Bagong Alyansang Makabayan yesterday said it was holding the Arroyo administration directly responsible for the latest killings. It said the defense establishment, the military and police hierarchies, as well as the Cabinet security cluster had done nothing to stop the rampage.

Tragic irony

"It is a tragic irony that these killings happened on the same day the Philippines got a seat in the United Nations Human Rights Council. How can a country aspire for a seat in the council when its own human rights record is utterly shameful and tarnished? It is a grim reminder and a slap on the face of the Philippine government," said Renato M. Reyes Jr., Bayan secretary general.

"How can Ms Arroyo save Filipino lives in Saudi Arabia and not save the lives of activists in her own country?" he added, referring to the President's visit to the Middle East and her plea in behalf of imprisoned Filipinos there.

Karapatan urged the President to order an investigation into the killings of activists and to condemn the extrajudicial executions in the same manner she condemned the killings of journalists and ordered their probe.

Systematic

"We are outraged that disappearances and extrajudicial killings committed by state agents exacerbate and are continuously tolerated by the Arroyo administration. In the minds of survivors, families of victims and human rights organizations, this is a systematic effort to annihilate people who hold a different opinions on the country's situation and how it could be changed," said Karapatan information officer Ruth Cervantes.

No pattern—PNP

Despite the wave of attacks on leftist activists, police authorities have refused to see a "pattern" to the murders.

They also insisted there was "no factual" basis to blame the killings on the security units of the government.

"(Investigations) by the Philippine National Police showed no strong indicators that would establish that theory," said police spokesperson Senior Supt. Samuel Pagdilao, referring to the militants' claims of a campaign to decimate their ranks.

Pagdilao said it was not necessary at this point to create a national task force to investigate the murders. "For you to say that (that the activists were being targeted), there must (be) a pattern, but there is no basis (to say that)," he said.

Pagdilao challenged the activists to back their claims with evidence that the Armed Forces, the PNP or other agents of government were behind the attacks.

Task force?

However, the PNP Directorate for Investigation and Detective Management would be asked to "establish the existence of a pattern of serialized killings victimizing these people," Pagdilao said."

"If there were one, that will guide our leadership to come up with an action like create a task force or assign the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group to focus or concentrate on these cases, rather than leave them to the territorial police," he said. *With reports from Norman Bordadora, Luige A. del Puerto and Scott James Roxas in Manila, AFP*

Isabela solon says Aragoncillo is a hero

By Michael Lim Ubac

IN THE EYES OF ISABELA REP. Rodito Albano, former Federal Bureau of Investigation analyst Leandro Aragoncillo is a patriot who was only looking after the welfare of his erstwhile countrymen when he downloaded classified US information on the political situation in the Philippines and passed this on to Filipino opposition figures.

"What this (espionage case proves) is his sense of loyalty to the country," Albano told reporters yesterday, as he called on politicians to help Aragoncillo get a lighter sentence.

Aragoncillo pleaded guilty in a US court last week to using his access to White House and FBI computers to download and deliver classified information to President Macapagal-Arroyo's political opponents, including former President Joseph Estrada, Sen. Panfilo Lacson and former Speaker Arnulfo Fuentebella, among others.

The House majority said this proved that the opposition, which might have financed Aragoncillo's operation, had actively conspired to oust Ms Arroyo.

A local newspaper (not the INQUIRER) reported that Albano, an Arroyo ally, was the same person identified in US court documents as "Representative No. 1" who was among those who had allegedly received classified material from Aragoncillo.

Albano would neither confirm nor deny this, saying, "We don't know the circumstance of Representative No 1. What did he do?"

He confirmed exchanging e-mails with Aragoncillo but said these were purely personal messages since they were longtime friends who wrote each other about developments in and out of the Philippines.

Albano admitted that his phone conversations with Aragoncillo were bugged by US authorities but he denied he had received classified information or that he had passed on US assessments of Filipino politicians to Ms Arroyo.

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HEDGE VS HUNGER

Gov't eyes safety nets for poor

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

AS THE BOOM IN THE FINANCIAL markets further entrench the country's wealthier classes, an economic adviser of President Macapagal-Arroyo has called for ameliorating policies to ensure economic equity and social harmony.

Acknowledging that the surging stock market may not necessarily be benefiting the mass of Filipinos, administration Rep.Joey Salceda said the government might need to provide "safety nets" in the form of food stamps, emergency employment and the like to help poor Filipinos cope with hard times.

He also said adjustments in policy may be needed to ensure that the rich would shoulder the bulk of the country's tax burden.

"The new highs in hunger statistics coinciding with a seven-year high in the stock exchange index is a challenge to this administration," the Albay congressman said in an interview.

Salceda made the comments in the face of criticisms that only the more affluent Filipinos have benefited from an apparently improving economy as a result of the new taxes imposed by the administration to carry out fiscal reform and cope with a budget deficit.

The expanded value-added tax, imposed in January, was a key part of the fiscal reforms aimed at raising chronically weak revenues and ensuring a balanced budget by 2008.

The introduction of the expanded VAT helped lift confidence in the country's economic outlook, as reflected in the booming stock market, the surge in the value of the peso and the lowering spreads or interest rates on Philippine government bonds.

To the surprise of even the government officials themselves, economic growth rate in 2005 was higher than expected at 5.1 percent.

Worsening lives

But as some economic experts and surveys have noted, there seemed to be a discontinuity between the booming capital markets and the real economy as the lives of ordinary Filipinos seemed to be worsening.

Last Tuesday, Sen. Manuel Roxas, Ms Arroyo's former trade secretary, commented that the news that the stock market had surged to a seven-year high this week did not mean that the economy was good. He noted that investments in the stock market did not directly benefit the people unless these find their way into new businesses that create jobs.

Salceda said that the initial stages of fiscal consolidation were always problematic, attended by distortions in income distribution, and aggravated in recent weeks by runaway international oil prices.

"While the rich benefit from rising stock markets, working families are losing purchasing power. But the other prospect was worse because the poor gets hit more in a fiscal crisis if we don't pursue fiscal reforms," he said.

Salceda explained that bringing the gains from the fiscal reforms down to the masses would take time and much patience.

"While taxes immediately impact on living standards, it takes time for investments to create new jobs and for increased competition to mitigate prices. It is exacerbated by leakages in collections where the rich can get away with murder. Similar leakages in expenditure compound the inequity by depriving low-income families of any countervailing benefit," Salceda said.

Tax the rich more

To shorten the time gap between the pain of the present and the gains of the future, Salceda said the government should "modulate" tax collections and spending to ensure that taxation would hit the poor the least, and collect more from the rich.

The government should also spend its resources on "well-targeted and efficiently delivered social services, he said.

" But the reality is the rich get away by hiring good lawyers and tax accountants, the middle-class just downgrade their lifestyle and the poor's only option is to starve," Salceda said.

For this reason, it is important that the government implement more vigorous safety net programs such as emergency employment, food stamps, lifeline rates, transportation vouchers, he said.

The government could also try to soften the impact of the added VAT on oil by shifting back to the excise tax system, which would exempt future oil prices increases from the VAT.

"The situation simply demands stronger measures from the government. We can't rely on markets to correct the distortions in income distribution on account of external shocks and fiscal consolidation," said Salceda.

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Demolition job, DepEd exec says of graft raps

AN OFFICIAL OF THE Department of Education (DepEd) branded the graft charges filed against him and five of his colleagues, including DepEd officer-in charge Fe Hidalgo, as a demolition job.

"Who will benefit from this? Why are the top officials of DepEd being eased out?" DepEd Assistant Secretary Camilo "Bong" Montesa asked.

Montesa also claimed that the complaint, filed by one Evangeline Benitez, was based on "double hearsay."

"We are being implicated based on what the complainant supposedly heard from a person who overheard another person saying that money was to be given to us," Montesa said expressing belief that the complaint is a fictitious person.

In her complaint filed before the Office of the Ombudsman, Benitez claimed that Hidalgo in collusion with Montesa, Undersecretary Ramon C. Bacani and Antonio Inocentes, Assistant Secretary Jesus G. Galvan and Thelma G. Santos approved the resetting of the May 4 bidding for the supply and delivery of noodles, biscuits and powdered Choco-milk for the DepEd's health and nutrition project worth more than P4[illegible] million. *Alcuin Papa*

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Judge inhibits self from rebellion case, insists decision was voluntary

By Tarra V. Quismundo

A MAKATI JUDGE HAS INHIBITED herself from the rebellion case against Rep. Crispin Beltran and Lt. Lawrence San Juan but said she did so for reasons other than those advanced by the Department of Justice when it formally asked that she excuse herself from hearing the case because of an alleged bias.

Judge Jenny Lind Aldecoa-Delorino insisted during an interview with the INQUIRER yesterday that there was no pressure on her to inhibit herself from the case even if the prosecution had demanded she do so in a formal motion.

"There was no pressure from any side," Delorino told the INQUIRER. "It was my own volition to inhibit myself."

The DOJ sought Delorino's inhibition last Monday, saying she exhibited partiality and undue haste when she rejected a move by the prosecution to amend the original indictment against Beltran and San Juan to include 40 other people in the case, including five party-list members of Congress and former Sen. Gregorio Honasan.

She had rejected the amended criminal information on the ground that it was an altogether new indictment.

Voluntary inhibition

In ruling on the prosecution motion asking for her inhibition last Wednesday, Delorino declared:

"She is voluntarily inhibiting herself not for any of the grounds cited by the prosecution because those grounds do not exist. This judge is mindful that there remains pending … two motions filed by [the] accused."

She was referring to a motion by Beltran asking the court determine if there was probable cause to proceed with the trial and another motion by San Juan asking that the rebellion charge be quashed.

"However, any action or ruling that this judge may make on these pending motions, should she choose not to recuse herself, no matter its correctness and objectivity, will always be subject to question and suspicion on the part of the prosecution, which may ultimately be detrimental to the rights of the accused," she said.

"What the judge did in these proceedings was to provide a level playing field for all the parties involved, and to rule on the basis of law and jurisprudence, without regard for personal feelings. The prosecution's perception that this judge has acted with manifest bias and partiality is, therefore, downright unfounded," she added.

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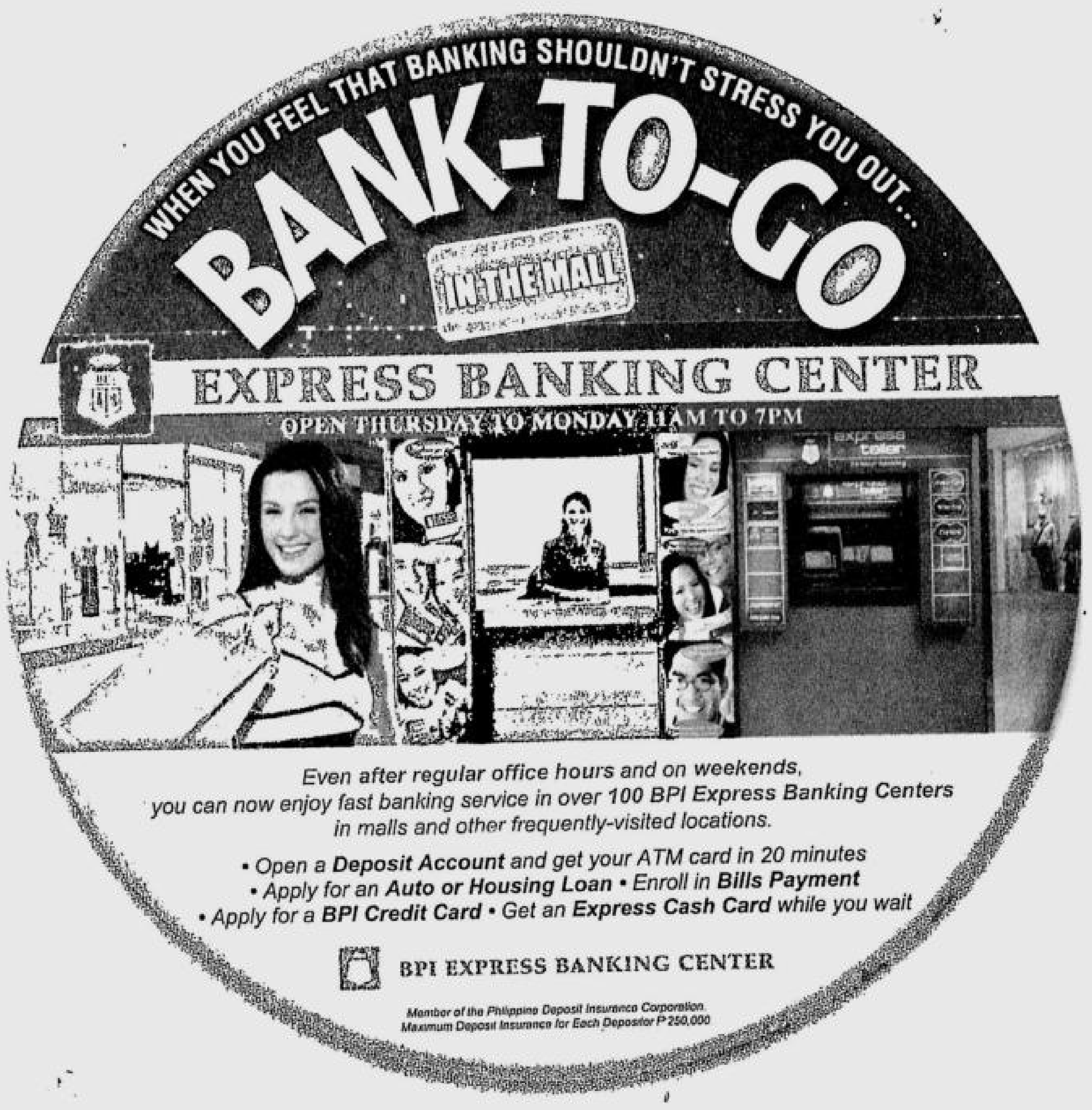

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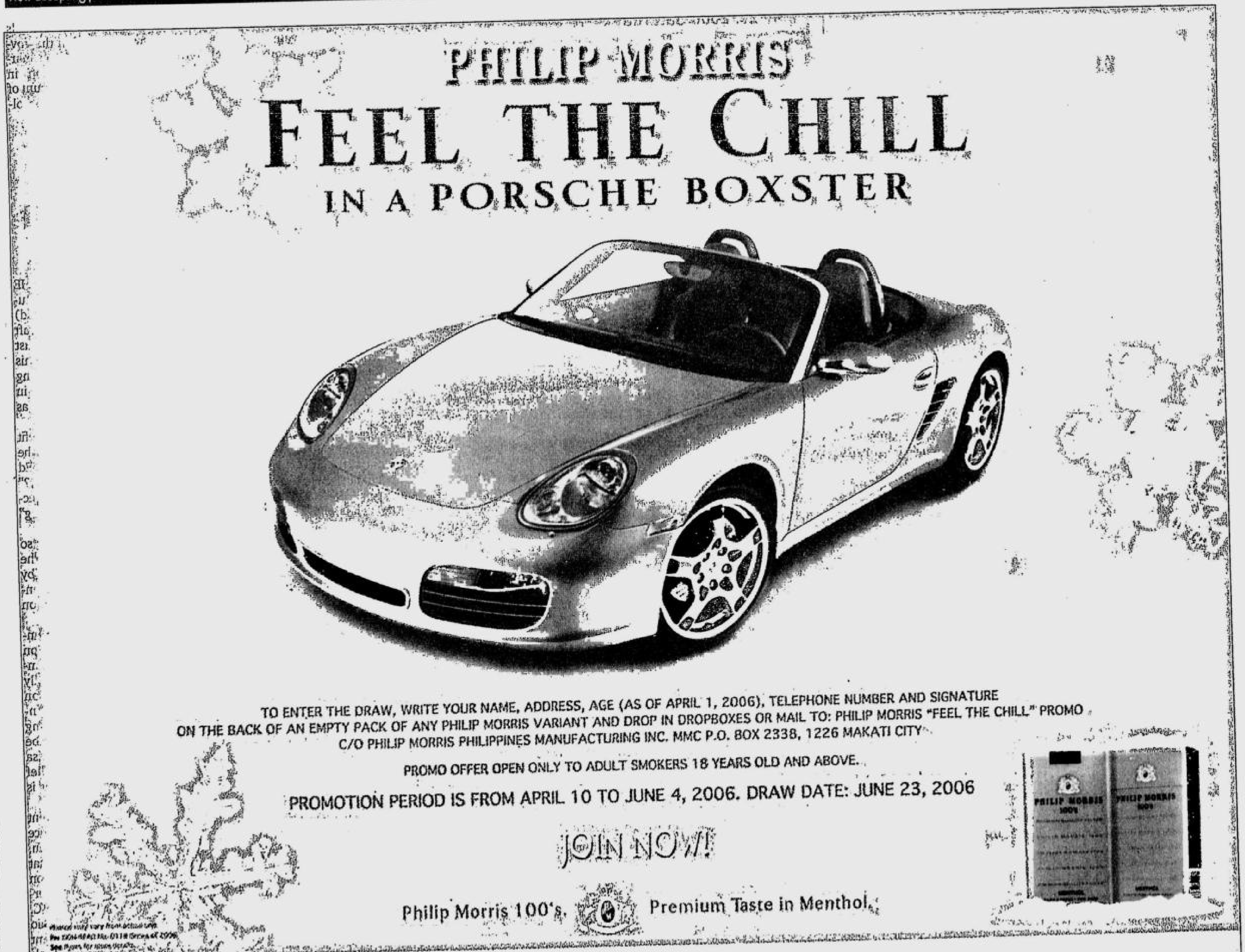

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CBCP: Make public Mayuga, fertilizer scam reports

From page A1

tentious actions by Ms Arroyo prohibiting officials from attending legislative hearings and her proclamation of a state of national emergency in February.

The CBCP leader said the prelates had earlier expressed their opposition to the gag rule in Executive Order No. 464 and the President's assumption of emergency powers under Presidential Proclamation No. 1017.

Probe Comelec officials

"We commend the Supreme Court as an independent institution of government for clarifying the constitutional parameters of EO 464 and PP 1017," Lagdameo said.

He said that the 122-member CBCP remained firm about the need to reform the Commission on Elections and said the Ombudsman's investigation of election officials involved in anomalous contracts should be completed as soon as possible.

Lagdameo also said the bishops were alarmed by the continuing and "deceptive" campaign to gather signatures under a people's initiative to effect a revision of the Constitution. *(See related story on this page.)*

In celebrating 2006 as the Year of Social Concerns yesterday, the CBCP in a statement reiterated its call for action from a moral standpoint.

"Other investigations conducted by other institutions of government should be followed up in the proper forum and fully reported to the public. We refer to the Senate hearings on the fertilizer fund appropriations which concluded that hundreds of millions of pesos remained unaccounted for. With other citizens' groups, we also ask for the full disclosure of the Mayuga report on the conduct of certain military officers in the last elections," the CBCP said in its statement.

People's initiative

CBCP vice president Antonio Ledesma said the group's call was not meant to pit one side against the other.

"Again, this is for the sake of the truth. It is not in terms of partisanship," Ledesma said.

He said that the CBCP's Social Action Centers had reported the signature campaign for the people's initiative was "deceptive, lacking in adequate information and discussion, and not initiated by the people."

Lagdameo refused to comment when asked if the CBCP was satisfied with the government's response to its pastoral letters calling for a search for the truth regarding alleged cheating in the 2004 election and expressing alarm at the people's initiative.

"What we are simply interested in is preaching what we feel should be done by our government, and we should also notice that probably our government is trying hard to respond to poverty, hunger, unemployment in our society today, from the economic point of view," Lagdameo said.

In its Pastoral Exhortation, the CBCP said it was concerned about the "pervasive sense of weariness, cynicism and hopelessness" among the people.

Civilization of love

It said the present situation in the country—the political turmoil, moral corruption and environmental degradation—along with the Pope's message that social concern was essential to preaching the gospel, made the focus on social concerns this year more urgent.

The CBCP said it was committing itself to a program of pastoral action involving the building of character, capacity and community.

It also called on the faithful and institutions to promote a "civilization of love" through anticorruption and livelihood programs, training sessions on good governance and good citizenship, election monitoring and voters' education, among other projects.

The CBCP commended the Pondo ng Pinoy program initiated by Manila Archbishop Gaudencio Cardinal Rosales, the Gawad Kalinga project that provides housing, and the Tabang Mindanaw program that raises funds for food.

Bishops proclaim 2006 'Social Concerns Year'

By Christian V. Esguerra

PROCLAIMING 2006 "SOCIAL Concerns Year," the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines has urged Filipinos to speak out more forcefully and get involved more in reforming Philippine society and restoring moral values and decency to public life.

"The direct duty to work for a just ordering of society is proper to lay faithful," Archbishop Angel Lagdameo, CBCP president, said in a statement quoting Pope Benedict XVI. "They cannot relinquish their participation in the many different economic, social, legislative, administrative and cultural areas, which are intended to promote organically and institutionally the common good."

The bishops hope their proclamation of 2006 as the year for social concerns would help jumpstart the tough task of renewing public life through moral values.

This was also theme of the bishops' first pastoral letter for the year which tackled the unresolved political crisis triggered by President Macapagal-Arroyo's alleged manipulation of the 2004 elections.

Lagdameo said the yearlong observance was aimed at raising the Filipinos' "moral consciousness with respect to the social issues affecting the country and to be aware of the responses being given by the Church."

The activities are to be kicked off with a Mass on May 11 to be concelebrated by Manila Archbishop Gaudencio Rosales and members of the CBCP permanent council at the Manila Cathedral.

Lagdameo said the Mass will allow networks of CBCP commissions and Catholic organizations to "continue to discern, strengthen their common mission and pray for social transformation."

In addressing social concerns, Catholics will have to rely primarily on "The Compendium of the Social Doctrines of the Church," a compilation of the Catholic Church's responses to key issues affecting society.

THE NEW ARRIVALS from Saudi Arabia besiege the Tesda staff at the airport to get their Training for Work Scholarship certificates that would entitle them to training in new skills and/or retraining in their fields of expertise. LYN RILLON

MILITARY HONORS are given to President Arroyo at Villamor Air Base following her arrival from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on Thursday. LYN RILLON

GMA trip to Saudi called major coup

From page A1

petrochemical plant in Bataan.

"The Saudi business sector was very receptive to my invitation to recycle their petrodollars to invest in the Philippines," Ms Arroyo said.

Strategic ally

"Saudi Arabia is a strategic ally of the Philippines not only because it hosts more than a million Filipino workers but also because it is our leading supplier of oil and a leading supporter of our peace process in Mindanao," the President said in her arrival statement.

She said King Abdullah had actually ordered the release of more than 500 jailed Filipinos during her state visit. She said that about 200 others were released in February in anticipation of her trip.

"The king told me how he cherishes our workers," she said. "Our message to our people is that you can rely upon your government to intensify cooperation with Saudi Arabia to always take care of the welfare of our workers there," she said.

From the Cabinet meeting, Ms Arroyo proceeded to the hangar. She had barely stretched her hand to the freed prisoners when they engulfed her with hugs and kisses to thank her for convincing the King to pardon them.

Hastily made posters

Some of the OFWs cheered. Others chanted her name. A handful held out three hastily hand-made posters expressing their gratitude to the President and the King.

Ms Arroyo, accompanied by Vice President Noli de Castro and a majority of her Cabinet, smiled widely as she welcomed them home.

The Saudi government was represented by its embassy chargé d'affaires, Dr. Mohammad Nabil Bakharee, and other embassy officials.

Of the OFWs, 95 were men and 75 women, according to the official count of the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (Owwa). Most of the women wore abayas.

There were also nine minors, mostly infants and toddlers—children of some of the repatriated women.

The OFWs came mostly from Riyadh, Jeddah and Damam.

Happy to be home

Most of the OFWs said they were imprisoned for offenses such as running away from their employers and drinking alcohol. Some said they were arrested simply because their agencies in Saudi failed to comply with the regulations of the Saudi government.

Owwa official Connie Marquez told the INQUIRER that only after the 170 OFWs were processed would the agency know exactly what their offenses were.

"We are very happy to be home," a smiling Hanaripa Said, 25, told the INQUIRER. Said, who hails from Marawi City, worked as a domestic helper for three months in Damam. She was jailed for a month and a half after she was arrested after her agency was closed down by the Saudi government.

Only 11 OFWs had family members to meet them at the air base. The Owwa said most of their relatives lived in the provinces and the agency only received the final list of those to be repatriated on Wednesday night.

Well-wishers

But the repatriated OFWs were not wanting in well-wishers. The airport authority brought out some 100 porters and several ranking officials to welcome them. Another 100 Tesda employees were also present.

There were also several members of an OFW family club at the hangar. Many of the well-wishers waved little Philippine flags and banners welcoming the OFWs home.

The OFWs were given P5,000 scholarships by Tesda for technical and vocational courses, and livelihood skills, which would be valid up to December. A Tesda official said this was aimed at encouraging the OFWs to enhance their skills and find work here in the Philippines.

Hundreds more left behind

The activist group Migrante, whose members include OFWs' relatives, said Ms Arroyo had not mentioned the hundreds more left behind in jails in Saudi Arabia and other Middle East countries or the sexual abuse suffered by Filipino women workers there.

"Given that more substantial changes or policies regarding the exploitative working conditions, sexual harassment, rape, contract substitution and the wages of Filipino migrants were not addressed, the sad reality may be that in a few weeks or months, Saudi Arabia's prisons may again be unjustly filled with even more overseas Filipino workers," the group said in a statement.

But Speaker Jose de Venecia was profuse in his praise of Ms Arroyo's trip to the Arab kingdom, saying it was a "major coup" with the king's assurance of uninterrupted oil supplies to the Philippines.

"President Arroyo's visit was one of the most successful by any foreign leader—and any Asian—to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia." *With reports from Christine O. Avendaño, Fe Zamora, Michael Lim Ubac and Jerome Aning*

Storm 'Caloy' roars toward Samar; thousands stranded

From page A1

bring rains to Metro Manila on Saturday afternoon, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said.

"The Bicol region, Eastern Visayas and northeastern Mindanao will experience rains and gusty winds and coastal waters will be moderate to rough," Pagasa said in its 5 p.m. bulletin on Thursday.

Signal No. 2

Storm Signal No. 2 was raised in Catanduanes, Albay, Sorsogon, Burias, Ticao Island, Camarines provinces in Bicol as well as the Samar provinces and Biliran Island in Eastern Visayas.

Signal No. 1 was hoisted in Quezon, Polilio Island, Marinduque, Romblon, Masbate, Leyte, and the islands of Siargao and Dinagat.

As heavy rains pounded Sorsogon, the Philippine Coast Guard suspended ferry services in the province, leaving 4,200 passengers and dozens of vehicles stranded in the key ports of Matnog, Pilar and Bulan. Another 200 passengers and 22 vehicles were stranded at the Tabaco port in Albay.

All outdoor games at the Palarong Pambansa in Naga City were also suspended. *(See related story in Sports, Page A29.)*

Pagasa forecaster Ben Sawi tracked the center of the storm near Leyte, where six days of continuous rains caused a mudslide that buried an entire village and killed about 1,000 people in February.

To exit Sunday

Caloy, the third tropical storm to enter the country this year, is expected to be 200 km north northwest of Catarman, Northern Samar, or 80 km west of Virac, Catanduanes, by this afternoon.

Caloy is expected to exit Pangasinan by Sunday afternoon, according to Pagasa.

"Provinces with warning signals are alerted against flash floods and landslides. The public and the disaster coordinating councils concerned are advised to take appropriate action," the weather bureau said.

An average of 19 tropical storms and typhoons strike the Philippines every year, killing hundreds of people through floods, landslides and other hazards induced by strong winds and heavy rains.

La Niña ends

The storm warning came as Pagasa officially declared the end of La Niña, an extreme weather phenomenon that affected most of Asia and caused above average rainfall since November last year.

"The weak La Niña that prevailed in the equatorial Pacific Ocean for a short period of time from November 2005 to April 2006 has ended," Pagasa said in its final La Niña advisory released yesterday afternoon.

"Atmospheric and oceanic indicators have remained close to normal . . . For the month of May, rainfall conditions are expected to be near average in most parts of central and northern Luzon," it added.

These areas include Palawan, Cavite, Batangas, Northern Samar, southern Antique, Negros Occidental, Zamboanga del Sur, the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao and Central Mindanao. *With reports from Bobby Labalan and Edgar Alejo, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau; and AFP*

Freak tornado kills woman, leaves hundreds homeless in Pampanga

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

SASMUAN, PAMPANGA—A 52-year-old woman died of a heart attack while a 7-year-old boy was injured when a freak tornado struck Barangay Sto. Tomas here at around 8:45 p.m. on Wednesday, officials said.

Vice Mayor Mozart Panlaqui said Pita Limpin died while Emmanuel Arce was hit in the leg by a metal sheet as the tornado ripped through the village, destroying at least 70 houses and leaving hundreds of residents homeless.

Panlaqui said residents began rebuilding their homes on Thursday.

Ferdinand Pantig, barangay captain of Sto. Tomas, said most of the villagers were watching television when the tornado ripped through the village.

"The tornado ripped through the roofs, hurled these in all directions. Up in the air, the metal objects collided and sparked. It's good that no fires occurred," Pantig said.

Cristina Bamba, 47, said the tornado changed course, swirled into nearby Barangay Bangcal in Guagua town at 9 p.m., then struck Sto. Tomas again.

Guagua Mayor Ricardo Rivera said the tornado destroyed four houses and damaging eight others in Bangcal.

Amelita Pring, barangay captain of Bangcal, said a tricycle picked up off the road by the tornado was later found in a cemetery.

Before the onset of the rainy season, tornadoes usually hit Pampanga's coastal towns of Masantol and Macabebe, according to reports of the Pampanga Disaster Coordinating Council.

Meteorologists said the freak tornado was caused by severe thunderstorms brought about by abrupt temperature changes at the onset of the rainy season.

Environmental group offers 'green fiesta' tips

By Blanche S. Rivera

EXCHANGE THOSE BALLOONS AND PLASTIC "banderitas" for plants. Gather the excess food and give it to the homeless or the neighbors, and the food discards to the dogs. Use cloth table napkins.

These were some of the "green fiesta" tips released by the Ecowaste Coalition, a network of environmental organizations and communities which came out with its to-do list for a zero-waste, or at least, less trashy month of festivities.

Earth-friendly

Responding to what it called a "waste dilemma" during the countless fiestas held around the Philippines during the month of May, the coalition issued practical guidelines to make celebrations, if not waste-free, at least cleaner and greener.

In planning the fiesta, the organizers or the "comite de festejos" should keep the environment in mind and take steps to inform the community about the need for and benefits of an earth-friendly fiesta to inspire everyone to get involved.

Decorations should be made with reusable, recyclable or biodegradable materials. Instead of the usual plastic streamers or balloons, plants and flowers could highlight the homes and venues.

To reduce expenses and leftovers, plan the menu in advance so that food should only be purchased in amounts that are sufficient to feed the household members and guests, Ecowaste suggested.

Banana leaves

Try the traditional banana leaves to serve the meals and use washable table napkins. Share extra food with the neighbors and the needy, or compost the discards if there are no animals to eat them.

Other waste products should be segregated and properly disposed and not mixed, dumped or burned, the group said.

"We can make our fiesta a fitting expression of our communion as stewards of Mother Nature by reducing waste to zero or darn near, putting a stop to all polluting practices, conserving water, electricity and other finite sources, and saving funds for basic needs and charities," Ecowaste Coalition said in a statement.

Visible garbage stations

Organizers of variety shows, beauty pageants, talent shows, street parties and other festive events were encouraged to set up visible garbage stations for biodegradable and non-biodegradable waste.

The group put together the tips and prepared materials that would be distributed to parishes and communities.

Metro Manila generates at least 5,000 tons of garbage daily, and this increases noticeably on days marked with fiestas, Ecowaste said.

Ecowaste has written the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines to inform them of the green fiesta ideas and seek help in disseminating the tips.

"(CBCP president) Archbishop Angel Lagdameo… supports your pro-environment advocacy and programs… Your campaign would be properly disseminated through the programs of the CBCP-Ecology office," CBCP secretary general Juanito Figura said in a letter to Ecowaste dated April 19.

Ecowaste also gave ideas on how to reduce waste and pollution from religious processions. The group said parishes should consider doing processions in daylight.

If it is inevitable for the procession to take place in the evening, use candles that do not emit excessive soot, and fireworks should be avoided, the group said.

"Bursting firecrackers or burning fiesta discards such as plastic buntings, stage props and party disposables discharge persistent organic pollutants (POPs) and other harmful chemicals that can injure our ecosystems and impair the health of humans and other beings," Ecowaste said. *With LJ Pasion, trainee*

'Tis the feast …

From page A1

the heavens for that much-awaited son or daughter, the single woman can sway to the music of a brass band during a procession in celebration of the 243rd feast of Señor San Roque in Valenzuela City, and pray for someone to marry.

The yearly fiesta in honor of San Roque is celebrated in other parts of the country in August. But in Valenzuela (formerly Polo), D-Day falls on the 12th of May.

San Roque, who is popular for his supposed healing powers, is now also becoming known as the patron saint of the unmarried, particularly among Valenzuela residents.

Happy stories

"We can no longer trace how the belief started, but we all know of happy stories from those who danced at the procession," said Marither Menia, who has lived in Valenzuela all her life.

Marither said one of her favorite stories was that of a woman who danced at the procession after attending a morning Mass during the fiesta some 20 years ago.

"In the evening her ex-boyfriend called her up from the United States and told her that he was coming home to see her," Marither narrated.

Another woman who danced at the procession and met her husband five months later was Lorena Natividad Borja, a member of the Valenzuela City Council.

"It was an answered prayer, and I really believe it was through the intercession of Señor San Roque," said Lorena, who is happily married to Ian Borja, a councilor of Malabon City. They now have two children.

Lorena said she met Ian through another friend five months after dancing in honor of San Roque in May 2003.

She said she and Ian were introduced in October, got engaged in December, and were married the following year.

'Someone I asked for'

Lorena said that while swaying to the music of the band in the sweltering heat, she fervently prayed to San Roque for a man to marry.

"I'm glad I decided to dance at the fiesta after two years of not being involved with anyone," she said.

Since then, she said, she had made it a family affair to attend the fiesta and the Mass.

But she no longer dances at the procession.

Every time they came to visit, she said, "I would always tease my husband as someone I asked for from San Roque," she said.

Lorena has a piece of advice for those intending to dance at today's procession in Valenzuela: "They must have faith for their prayers to be answered."

'Miracles'

From accounts of the history of the feast of San Roque, the "miracles" started in 1637 when the residents of the town of San Roque came down from the mountains.

The townsfolk were supposedly fleeing the English troops who invaded the barrios of Mabolo, Wakas, Dalandanan and Polo, which were all part of Valenzuela.

It is said that in the mountains, the townsfolk had contracted malaria and high fever. But they were instantly cured after holding a procession in honor of the saint.

The procession was said to have been held under the blistering heat of the sun, and in a fiesta atmosphere, with dancing and singing.

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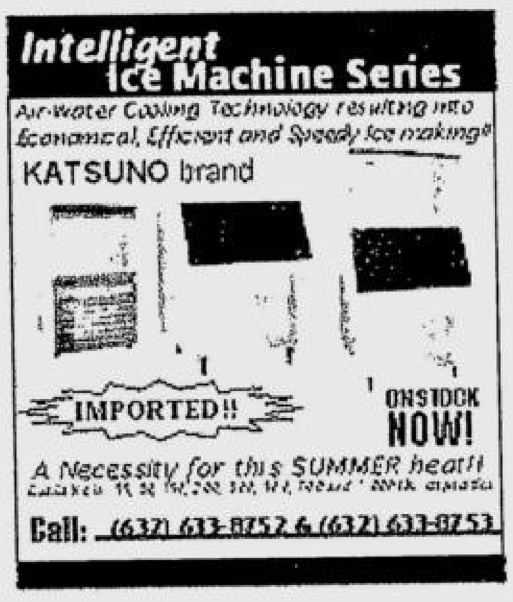

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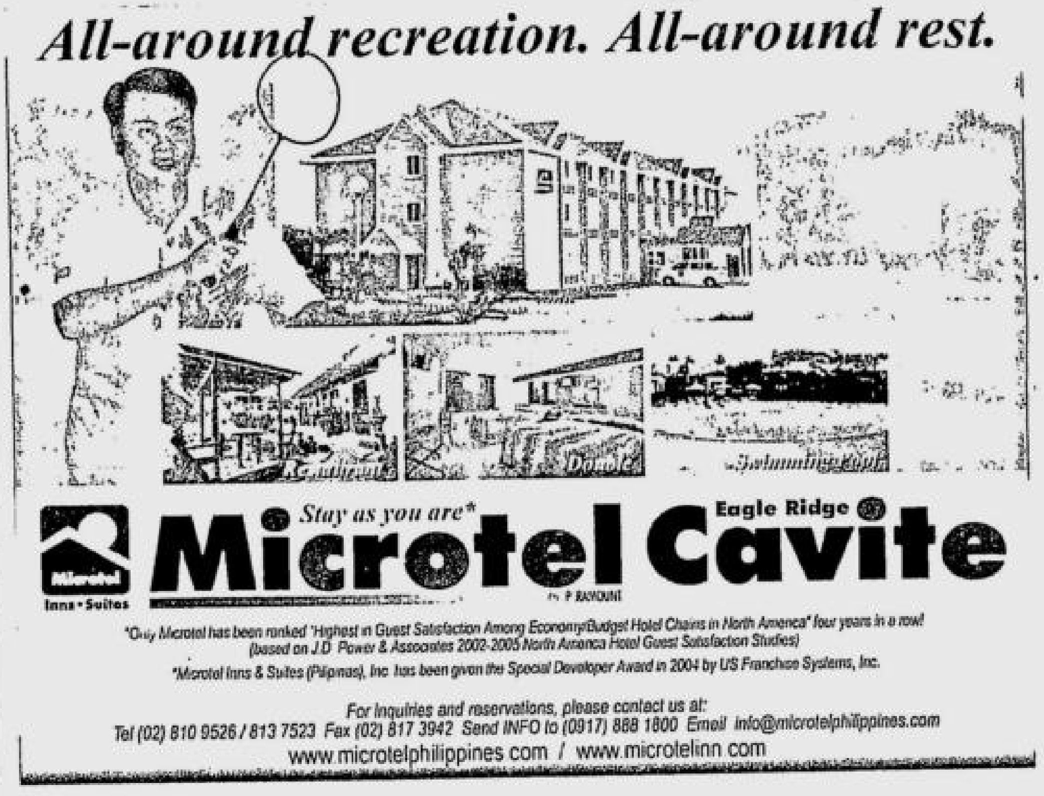

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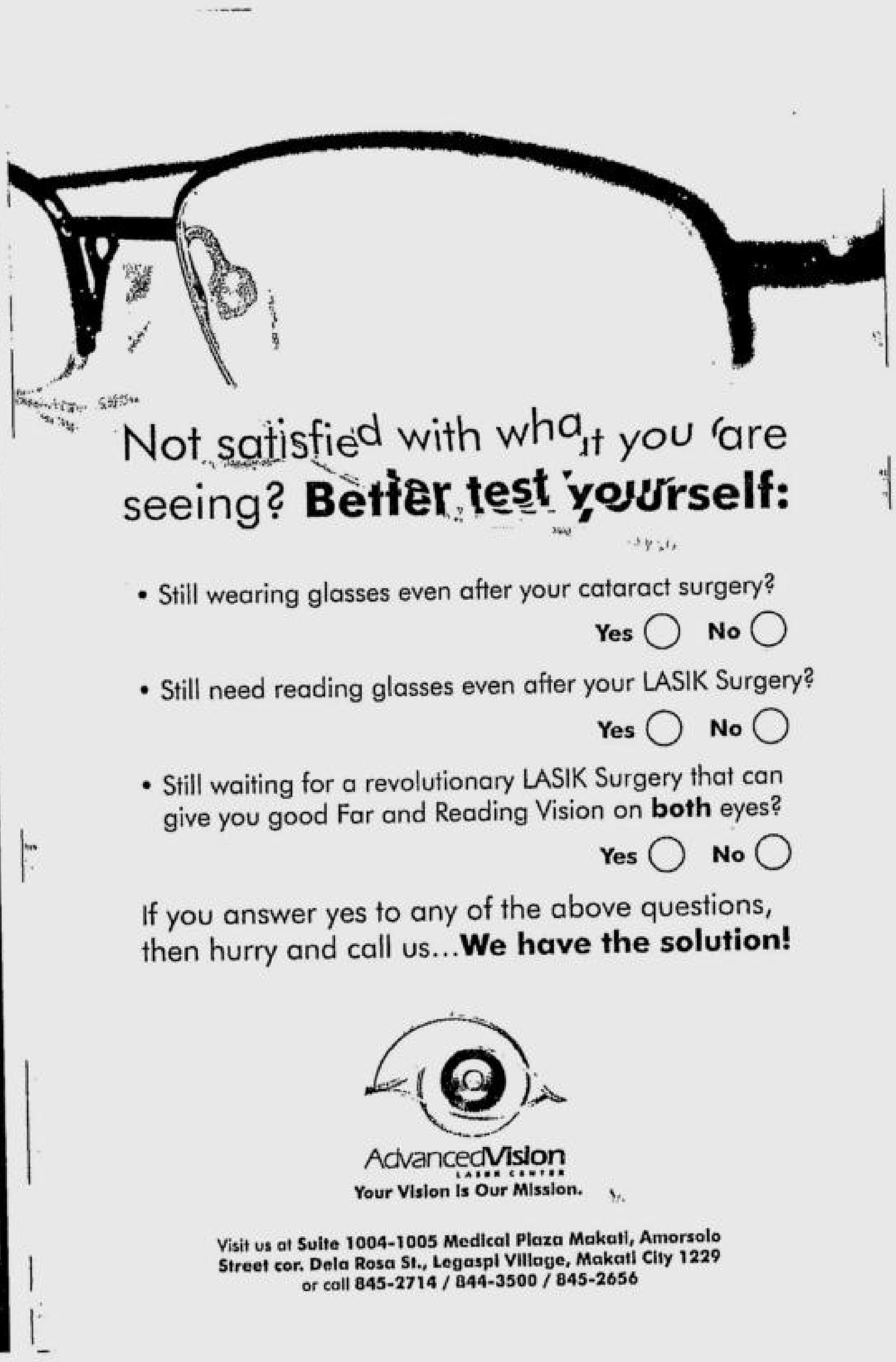

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Political milieu corrupting new lawyers, say legal vets

By Armand N. Nocum

TWO PROMINENT LAWYERS YESterday slammed certain colleagues in the profession, particularly those in government, for being bad examples to the newest members of the bar.

Although interviewed separately, Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP) president Anselmo Cadiz and Supreme Court spokesperson Ismael Khan were one in saying the political environment contributed to the corruption of young and idealistic lawyers.

"It's the political milieu," said Khan.

Cadiz was more forthright, singling out Malacañang lawyers who continued to justify edicts issued by President Macapagal-Arroyo even if these had been declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court.

Cadiz blamed it on "the general malaise of society."

The two lawyers were reacting to Chief Justice Artemio Panganiban's speech at the oath-taking of the country's 1,526 newest lawyers last Tuesday.

Panganiban had said that the way unscrupulous lawyers were throwing legal ethics to the wind, they could be worse than criminals.

"Society has the most to fear from these lawyers who have a wealth of legal knowledge but threadbare ethical moorings—they may turn out to be worse than the criminals they defend," he said.

He noted there were many smart lawyers who hid behind legal technicalities to advance their and their clients' interests at the expense of justice.

"In a society in constant flux such as ours, there is an ever-growing temptation to cut corners for easy solutions. Sadly, some lawyers have become adept at being merely legal technicians defending their client's causes," he said.

Cadiz agreed with Panganiban but blamed politics for corrupting the legal profession.

"It is in the leadership. How can you expect the legal profession to stand as a legal example when the elders tasked to lead the way are hiding behind technicalities," he said, referring to the congressmen-lawyers in the House allied with Ms Arroyo who caused the dismissal of the impeachment complaint against her last year on technicalities.

But Cadiz was quick to point out that, in contrast to the few who practiced the profession for money, there were thousands of principled and idealistic lawyers who worked tirelessly to advance the interest of justice.

Khan also blamed the law schools for "emphasizing the materialistic aspect" of the profession over the ethical.

"It's part of the damaged culture phenomenon— the emphasis on winning at all cost," Khan said.

The problem, he said, was compounded by the activities of high-profile lawyers in government who were "not exactly paragons of good, ethical and upright legal practice."

Thus, he said, Panganiban had taken it upon himself to help reform the legal profession.

"It's a question of going back to the core values of the law," he said.

Lafayette asks gov't to allow test run

THE MINING FIRM LAFAYETTE Phils. is asking the government to allow a test-run of its Rapu Rapu processing operations prior to a full restart, saying any further delay will have a significant effect on the company's finances, its host communities, and on investor confidence.

Carlos G. Dominguez, Lafayette chair and president, said in a press statement the company had been maintaining its project in Rapu Rapu Island in Albay at a cost of some P150 million a month the past six months that it has not been operating.

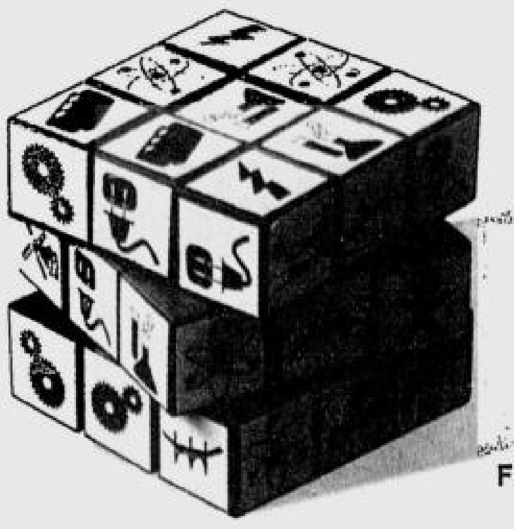
"The new management has complied with all the requirements as of mid-April and under the rules, we should be allowed to test if the remedial measures we have installed operate properly," he said.

Dominguez said the project's funders would like to see the legal process followed soonest especially because it continues to spend a lot of money without generating any income.

"A simple test run will go a long way in calming investors in general. Besides, we will be using just water and non-chemical-bearing load to see where else we need to fine-tune the system. And we would welcome all concerned parties to observe," he said.

Dominguez said timing is important because the project's processing plant is brand-new and would have to undergo a commissioning phase which takes longer than if it already had been in operation before.

"Every day's delay will cost us in terms of maintenance costs and lost opportunities. At the same time, our host communities will not be able to feel the full benefits from the project, which is the biggest investor in the region to date," he said.



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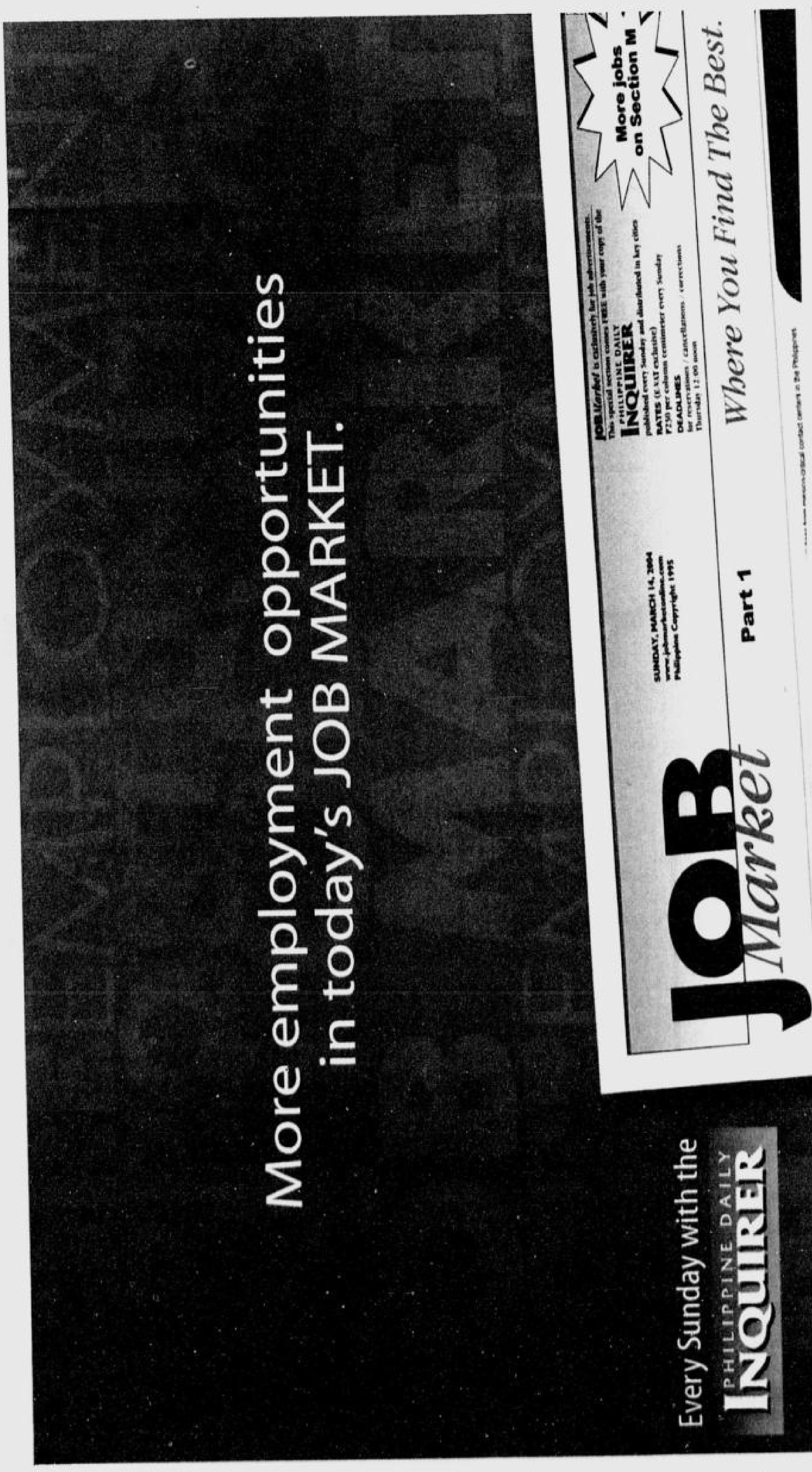

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SUBIC RAPE TRIAL

When does counting start? Debate rages

By Tarra V. Quismundo

WHEN SHOULD THE COUNTING START?

The opposing camps in the Subic Bay rape case argued in court yesterday over when the counting should begin for the one-year period provided for under the Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA) to conduct the trial.

During the hearing in Branch 139 of the Makati Regional Trial Court, the private prosecutors and the lawyers of the four US Marines charged with raping a Filipino woman in Subic, vied to have their opposing interpretations of the VFA provision accepted by the court.

The VFA, the RP-US pact that allows American troops in the country to hold joint exercises with the Philippine military, prescribes a one-year period within which trials of US servicemen charged in Philippine courts must be completed.

The VFA, however, does not say when the period should begin, whether from the time charges are filed or upon the arraignment of the accused.

Hence, while the private prosecutors began counting from April 28, when the accused were arraigned, the defense panel started counting from Dec. 27 last year, when the case was filed in court.

It was on Nov. 1, 2005, that four US Marines—Staff Sgt. Chad Brian Carpentier and Lance Cpls. Keith Silkwood, Daniel Smith and Dominic Duplantis—allegedly raped the Filipino woman in a cruising van in the Subic Bay Freeport.

Following a preliminary investigation, rape charges were filed against them 56 days after the alleged commission of the crime, on Dec. 27, 2005.

Defense lawyer Jose Justiniano told reporters:

"Our position is that it should begin when the information was filed in court. They [prosecution] have a different interpretation but for us that's not important ... What matters is that we start talking about the accusations. Besides, if the one-year period lapses we have an extradition treaty and there are remedies to that, and what they fear has no basis."

However, former Vice President Teofisto Guingona, one of the private prosecutors, said: "Under the treaty, the one-year period should start upon the beginning of judicial proceedings, meaning [the case is] already in court and the process has started. So our stand is the one-year period starts from the beginning of judicial proceedings. And when is that? Upon arraignment."

Branch 139 Judge Benjamin Pozon assured both parties he would resolve the matter and that he was ready to hold frequent hearings to complete the trial within the prescribed one-year period.

Isabel G. Castillo; 85

THE ASHES OF ISABEL GENEROSO Castillo of Bauan, Batangas, will arrive in Manila on May 15 and brought the following day to Funeraria Paz at the Manila Memorial Park in Sucat, Parañaque City.

After a Mass at 2:30 p.m. on May 17, her ashes will be interred beside the grave of her husband, Dr. Benjamin A. Castillo.

A resident of Canada for the past 13 years, Castillo passed away at 85 last May 6 (Vancouver time) at the Eagle Ridge Hospital in Port Moody, British Columbia.

A funeral Mass was held on May 9 at a local Catholic church, after which her remains were cremated.

Castillo is survived by her children, Benjie, Maribel, Randy, Bobby and Toti, their spouses, and 10 grandchildren.

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Japan eases OFW restrictions

By Jerome Aning

SENIOR LABOR DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS yesterday said Japan has conditionally agreed to withdraw its demand that the deployment to Japan of Filipino health workers be governed by a quota system.

"They've agreed to a non-quota arrangement but we've accepted some restrictions, probably the capacity of training institutions to accept a number of nurses, based on existing migration laws," said Danilo Cruz, the undersecretary for employment.

The quota issue has been the major sticking point in the ongoing negotiations on a free trade agreement between the two countries that was supposed to open up Japan's health sector to Filipino health workers.

But Japan, the Philippines' second largest trading partner after the United States, wants to limit to 100 the number of Filipino health workers allowed to work there.

Filipino nurses and certified caregivers would be allowed into Japan only after completing training on Nihongo and other subjects in preparation for obtaining their Japanese license.

The Philippines has been insisting on a "demand-based" deployment of nurses and caregivers to Japan where the market for their services is quite large because of the country's rapidly aging population.

"These are still not the final results of the negotiations, but there is already a common understanding. There's a specific provision there that there would be no quota arrangements. It's almost done, only the legal wording is being finalized," he said.

Cruz said that the soon-to-be-finalized agreement provides that the six-month training process would be be done in Japan. He said the Japanese would take the responsibility of training the Filipino workers at no cost to the Philippines.

"But we still have not determined the capacity of the training institutions, that will be determined in the implementation," he said.

The two countries also have yet to determine how large the initial deployment would be "but it will be continuous and not one-time," Cruz said.

Cruz, who is part of the Filipino negotiating team, stressed that the new deal was just a portion of the treaty, officially called the Japan-Philippines Economic Partnership Agreement, which must be approved in its entirety by both sides.

Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas earlier said the Philippines was standing pat on its no-quota stand, particularly because the Japanese did not state during the negotiations exactly how many Filipino health workers they would be taking.

Cruz also noted that similar trade agreements that Japan had concluded with Mexico and Singapore did not include provisions on the movement of nationals.

He said the planned visit next month of Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi would boost the chances of the treaty being approved soon.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Friday, May 12, 2006
4th Week of Easter
Nereus and Achilleus/Pancras

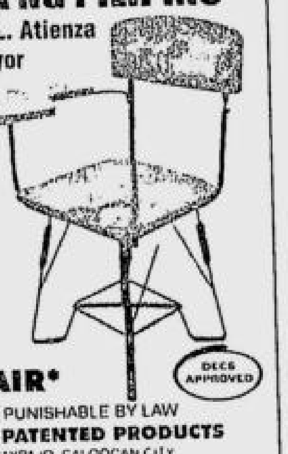
1st Reading:	Acts 13:26-33
Gospel:	John 14:1-6

Jesus said to his disciples, "Do not be troubled; trust in God and trust in me. In my Father's house there are many rooms. Otherwise I would not have told you that I go to prepare a place for you. After I have gone and prepared a place for you, I shall come again and take you to me, so that where I am, you also may be. Yet you know the way where I am going."

Thomas said to him, "Lord, we don't know where you are going; how can we know the way?" Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth and the life; no one comes to the Father but through me."

Commentary

Like Peter, Paul preaches the story of Jesus, rejected, crucified and raised from the dead. And he proclaims Jesus as the fulfillment of the promises of the prophets: "You are my son; this day I have begotten you." And this is the message we take to heart: we are all the sons and daughters of God. Jesus is the way, the truth and the life and we come to the Father with Jesus' own Spirit, and we come together. Grace given to us that comes to us through others.



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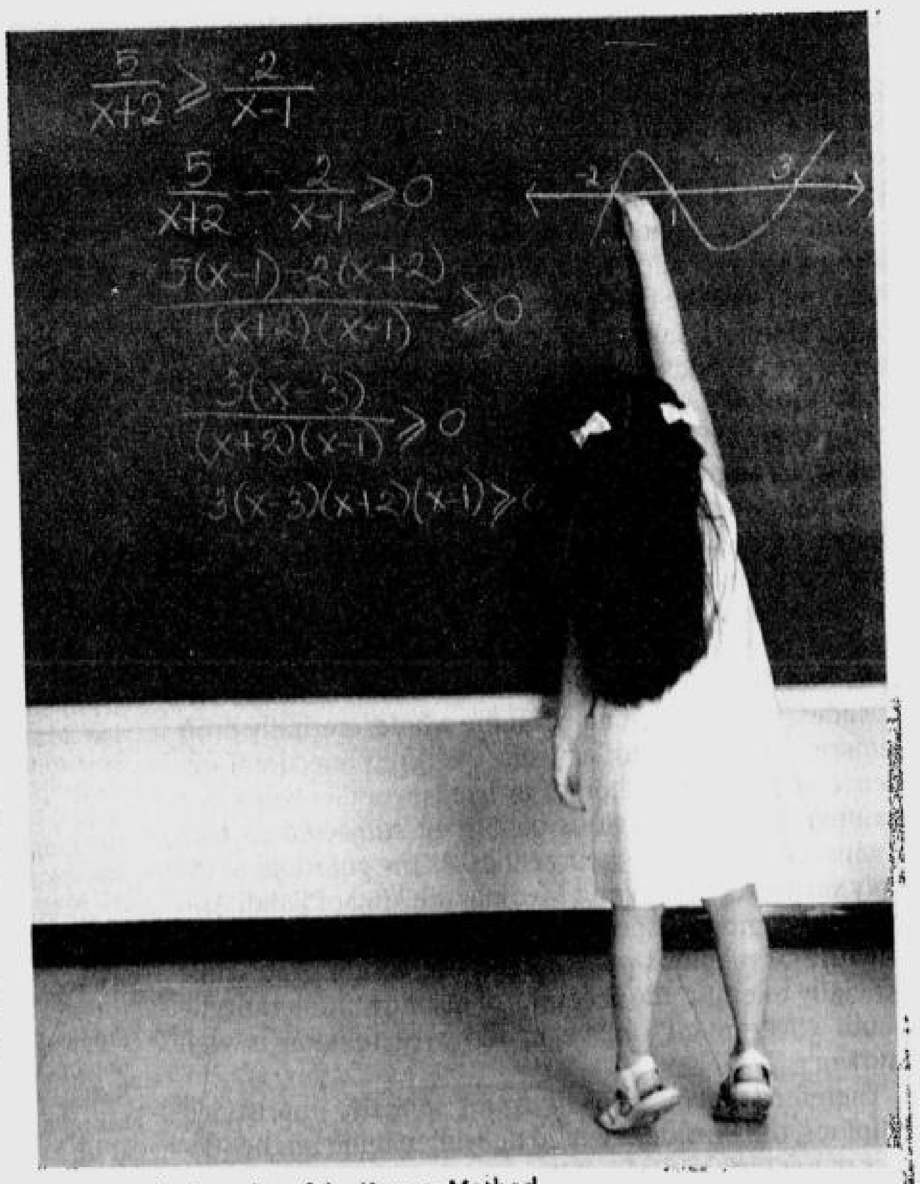

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OPINION

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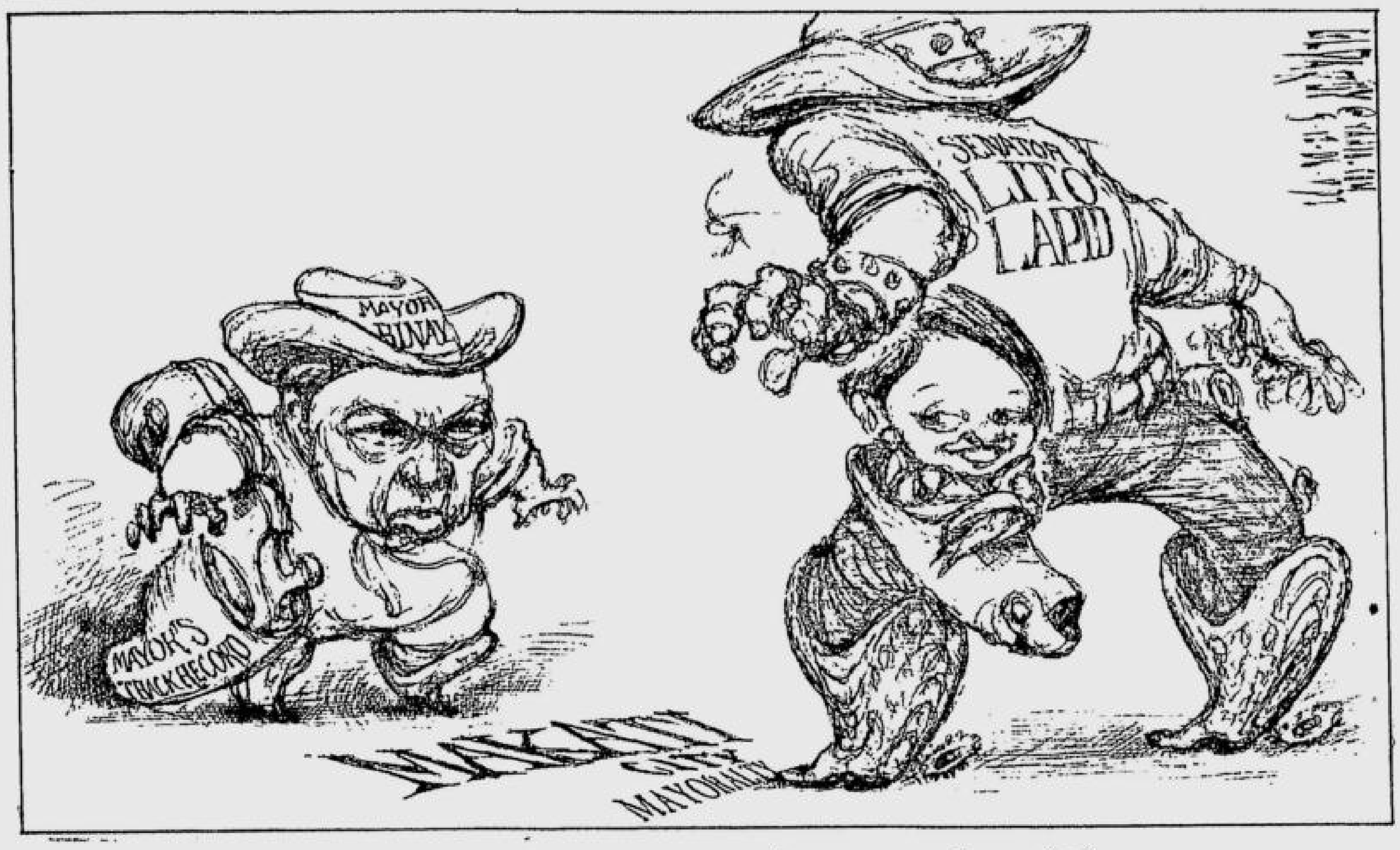

A politician's gift

EDITORIAL

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO'S OFFICIAL visit to Saudi Arabia was most remarkable not for what it achieved, but for what it dispelled. For months, the President had been hounded by rumors that she was keen on polishing her image by traveling abroad. However, as even personalities identified as close to, or influential with, the administration kept talking about the President's desire to go abroad, the hints kept hitting a blank wall of official indifference overseas. This was especially true days before the 20th anniversary of Edsa I, when Ms Arroyo was said to have been particularly eager to visit either the United States or Saudi Arabia.

That the President finally got to go to the Middle East, firmly dispels the notion that she is a kind of international pariah. And it accorded her the opportunity to do what she does best: putting her best foot forward overseas. Philippine presidents have always relished "showing the flag" abroad, and it is fair to say Ms Arroyo does so with panache.

Presidential visits are more than about bantam-style strutting on the world stage, of course. Ms Arroyo went to Saudi Arabia with three objectives in mind: to negotiate some kind of favorable guarantees concerning oil supplies; to lobby for the observer status for the Philippines in the Organization of Islamic Countries, and to intercede for her fellow citizens. With regard to oil, the President is now trumpeting achievements that may be so rhetorical as to be essentially meaningless. In terms of the decades-long lobbying effort for the country to sit in the OIC, she suffered no public reversal, so it can be claimed as a diplomatic move forward. As to her appeal to the king of Saudi Arabia to extend clemency to Filipinos who had run afoul of the law, that clearly was an overwhelming success.

The President's visit underscores the reality that she is a better politician than economist. That is to say, she has the politician's gift for squeezing the most publicity and media mileage from what may be fairly inconsequential business talks. In the Saudi Arabian scheme of things, guaranteeing a steady price for oil to the Philippines isn't a priority; and even if it were, far larger factors can always intrude into whatever commitments the Saudi monarch and his government may have made. Continued regional instability focusing on Iran and American aggressiveness toward that country, the insatiable thirst for oil of China, and India's rapidly expanding economy could sustain the roller coaster-like fluctuations of crude prices due to limited supplies.

Still, the President was received by the new Saudi king. She got to meet and greet Filipino workers, and following her home was the first batch among hundreds of Filipinos languishing in Saudi jails. On that score alone, her trip was worth it, and deserves the nation's appreciation. Still, the President's efforts placed a spotlight on the tragic side of the OFW experience. And the question is, what sort of follow-through there will be.

To have so many Filipinos in jail in a foreign country points to the challenges they face, and these include problems not of their own making. Unfair and oppressive contracts, inferior and degrading working conditions, the lack of adequate treaty safeguards for Filipinos overseas—all these are problems that OFWs have endured for decades, but which remain, on the whole, eternally problematic. We must add, as well, the often anecdotal evidence of Filipinos and other overseas workers being persecuted for their religious beliefs, or subjected to maltreatment because of their gender. As the guardian of the holy shrines of Mecca and Medina, the king of Saudi Arabia has religious responsibilities supported by an infrastructure of religious policing and regulation. And while officially tolerant, the accounts of just how intolerant the Saudi government can be in terms of religion is well known.

Therefore, having spoken up for so many imprisoned Filipinos, the President would do well to build on the success of her visit and negotiate agreements with the Saudi government that will prevent the abuse and persecution of Filipinos. She could assume a leading role for other nations that find themselves in a situation similar to ours, the nations that depend on the sweat and toil of their citizens abroad, but whose governments do little to protect their rights.

Setting the record straight (2)

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

(Continued from May 10)

I APOLOGIZE TO READERS WHO MAY BE bored by this narration of this problem among neighboring subdivisions over vehicle sticker fees, but this problem is not unique. Many other villages have similar problems and this column may help their residents understand the issues and find a solution. Besides, a letter to the editor from the presidents of three subdivisions last April 24 contained falsehoods and inaccuracies which, if not corrected, may give the wrong impression to readers.

For example, the letter said that "the Mira Nila clubhouse was built with the help of public funds." False. The clubhouse was built by the homeowners before Dante Liban and Chuck Mathay became congressmen. What Mathay did was put a roof over an existing basketball court during the 2004 election campaign. The funds came from his pork barrel, but curiously it was a billboard proclaiming that it was a project of President Macapagal-Arroyo, complete with her smiling face, that was put up beside the project. Nothing about Mathay.

What Liban did was pay the Manila Seedling Bank Foundation to plant tree seedlings and put up picnic tables and lighting in an existing forest park. The picnic tables and lighting system are gone now. The wooden tables rotted away and the light bulbs and buried electric wires were stolen. The Japanese-style stone lanterns were vandalized by squatters. Residents of neighboring subdivisions now play in the courts and enjoy the park.

The letter also said that "the main roads of the subdivision were given a new coat of asphalt, again with the help of the Quezon City government." Only half-true. Not all the main roads, but only those leading to Maries and the other subdivisions. The reason is that they were so battered by the great number of vehicles passing through and by numerous diggings by the government for water connections. Whose are the vehicles passing through? Guess. Shouldn't they be repaired by the government in exchange for the taxes the residents are paying?

The letter also said that "we pay Tierra Pura P400 per sticker, P200 of which goes to Mira Nila. Not satisfied with this cut, the homeowners' association has unilaterally decided to charge us P500 for a sticker which was P250 in the past. Worse, it charges its own residents only P250 for their stickers.... Their guards shake down every school bus and delivery vehicle that enters through the Mira Nila gates."

The Tierra Pura sticker is for the main six-lane Teodoro M. Kalaw Street (hence, it is called the TMK sticker). Half of it is in Tierra Pura and the other half in Mira Nila. Each village maintains its portion of TMK. So, they split the fee.

The protesters kept repeating in their petition with the Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board (they have a similar petition with the Quezon City government and still another with a court—a case of forum-shopping) that Mira Nila is selling "another TMK sticker." False again. What Mira Nila is issuing is a Mira Nila sticker for the use not of TMK but of the other streets leading to the entrances of the other subdivisions. Mira Nila security men guard these entrances. These subdivisions have other access routes to Tandang Sora and Luzon Avenue. Their residents can actually use these routes and avoid buying Mira Nila stickers, but they prefer to pass through Mira Nila for convenience. Well, they have to pay for the convenience while Mira Nila residents are inconvenienced by so many "outsider" vehicles passing through their streets and producing so much noise, dust, air pollution and traffic congestion. That is why villages like Embassy and Tierra Pura 6, which have no alternate routes, are charged only half, like the Mira Nila residents who, by the way, also pay P400 monthly membership dues, including those whose houses are on T.M. Kalaw, and thus rarely use other Mira Nila streets.

As for the school buses and delivery trucks, they are commercial vehicles operated for profit. They are heavy vehicles that cause more wear and tear on the streets. Shouldn't they pay for passing through private streets?

Why has Mira Nila increased its sticker fees? Well, don't they know that prices of everything are rising? The power rate for the street lights has risen. The price of gasoline for the grass cutters and blowers go up every week. The prices of construction materials have also gone up.

The petition of Maries Village with the HLURB is also full of false claims. It said, "T.M. Kalaw Street and Alondras Street are public roads… maintained by the city government." False. They are maintained by the Homeowners' Association. They were repaired only once by the city because of so many public diggings. Passersby can see the repairs and street improvements now going on. They're all being funded by Mira Nila residents.

To summarize, those (pardon the expression) "freeloaders" and "tightwads" who don't want to pay for car stickers are free to do so. All they have to do is avoid passing through TMK and use the other access routes. If they still want the convenience of passing through TMK without paying, they can leave an acceptable ID with the security guard.

When Congressional Avenue is finished, they will have direct routes to their subdivisions. They will no longer have to pass through Tierra Pura and Mira Nila and will not have to pay for car stickers. So instead of pressuring City Hall, the HLURB and the courts to stop Mira Nila from issuing car stickers, shouldn't they be pressuring the national government to finish Congressional Avenue quickly?

UP study on NorthRail: Some clarifications

PASSION FOR REASON

Raul C. Pangalangan

THE NORTHRAIL CAMPAIGN AGAINST ITS critics was revived recently, especially after the Supreme Court struck down Executive Order 464, a gag order that banned executive officials from testifying before legislative hearings, and which Malacañang issued and invoked one day before the Senate was about to hold a hearing on the NorthRail project.

In Senate of the Philippines v. Ermita, the Supreme Court noted that the Senate scheduled a "public hearing sparked by a privilege speech of Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile urging the Senate to investigate the alleged overpricing and other unlawful provisions of the … NorthRail Project." Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago had also criticized the project for being overpriced, while Sen. Richard Gordon had lamented that it fails to respond to the needs of the Subic and Clark economic zones.

Senate President Franklin Drilon, acting upon the Senate resolution, had referred the matter to the UP Law Center for study. I was then law dean, and I convened several faculty members to conduct the study, among them, the venerable Bartolome C. Fernandez Jr., former senior commissioner and general counsel of the Commission on Audit and author of the leading work on state contracts; Dean Merlin M. Magallona, former undersecretary of foreign affairs; Prof. Harry Roque, who went to the University of Michigan for college and to the London School of Economics for his LL.M., currently director of the International Legal Studies Institute; Florin Hilbay, 1999 bar topnotcher, Yale LL.M. and currently vice chair of Bantay Katarungan; Solomon Lumba, 2000 bar topnotcher and currently also teaching law at UP. I told these professors something that I was sure they already knew: this was an independent study, and they were free to make their own findings, which I would then transmit to the Senate.

The panel concluded that the NorthRail contract had been improperly packaged as an executive agreement. The Supreme Court has elsewhere ruled that executive agreements are treaties and are governed by the 1969 Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties—which means that only sovereign states can enter into these agreements. In other words, the NorthRail agreements were signed with Chinese corporations, not sovereign states, and were improper. Moreover, as an executive agreement, it would have evaded the open and competitive public bidding required under Republic Act 9184, the Government Procurement Reform Act.

Since then, NorthRail has embarked on a publicity campaign against the UP Law Center, and indeed one of its spokesmen even asked for the abolition of the Law Center itself! A few clarifications are in order.

One, the very first legal opinion of the UP Law Center on the NorthRail project in fact was issued in May 2005, months before GMA's crisis of legitimacy broke out when the existence of the Garci tapes was announced by Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye. It was made by the Law Center's Institute of Government and Law Reform. Neither Roque nor I was part of it, since it had been directly addressed to the institute's director, Prof. Carmelo Sison. That request was made by Sen. Joker Arroyo for the Senate blue ribbon committee, and not by the Senate president. It was limited to just one of the contracts involved, and did not touch on the rules that require a public bidding.

And what did that study say? That indeed it could not have been a valid executive agreement, and that the Constitution requires the concurrence of the Monetary Board for foreign loans contracted or guaranteed by the Republic. The UP Law Center has been criticized for being part of the post-Garci politics between Drilon and GMA, yet it began the study even before the Garci scandal erupted.

Second, it has been said that the UP Law Center had wrongly attributed the project to the China National Machinery & Equipment Corp. (CNMEC), rather than CNMEG (the CNME Group, which is supposedly more reputable than the former). Was it a mistake indeed? I have looked at copies of the relevant documents. Both these terms have been used by NorthRail itself, in both the contract papers and its own public statements.

The Contract Agreement was with "China National Machinery & Equipment Corporation (Group)." The Conditions of Contract was signed with "China National Machinery & Equipment Corporation (Group) (CNMEG)." Indeed, NorthRail's own full-page advertisement used these terms interchangeably, which is understandable given the contract papers cited above. This whole game of acronyms, mind you, does not release NorthRail from having to explain the bypassing of a public bidding through the improper use of an executive agreement.

Third, some NorthRail spokesmen have asked why the UP Law Center conducted the study at all, yet its own charter expressly mandates the Law Center to undertake legal studies upon request by the Senate acting "in aid of legislation." Historically, how can UP academics be faulted if they issue a legal opinion that politicos of various hues contest? (Congress itself requested some law deans, myself included, to give a legal opinion on whether the Garci tapes were admissible in evidence. So, private law schools can speak, but not UP? Wow.)

The media attacks are clever twice over. They amount to old-style squid tactics in propaganda, so that all of a sudden the issue is no longer whether executive agreements are a valid way to short-circuit the requirement of a public bidding—but instead, the issue is the UP Law Center. It is time for NorthRail to address the actual legal issues, instead of slaying the bearers of bad news that came in the form of a legal opinion it so abhors.

* * *

Comments to passionforreason@gmail.com

A silent rebellion against the Church

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

THE ANNOUNCEMENT MADE BY THE NATIONal Statistical Coordination Board that the Philippines' annual population growth rate slowed down to 1.95 percent last year, from 21.1 percent during 2000 and 2004 gave the National Economic and Development Authority a rare opportunity to claim that the rate was approaching the government's medium-term target of 1.94 percent.

Economists who have been calling for a more aggressive government campaign to curb population growth are not impressed. For example, Prof. Ernesto Pernia of the University of the Philippines School of Economics, pointed out that a 1.95 growth rate is unsustainable and that it is higher compared with other developing countries in Asia. He accurately described the government's efforts to bring down the population growth rate (if ever there has been any) as "practically nil." He that added programs to promote birth control have not been enough.

When Romulo Neri, Neda's director general, said the drop in the rate made the government's poverty-reduction goal attainable, he was overstating the virtually non-existent government efforts to arrest population growth.

Shifting the perspective away from the self-serving official claims, we are led to the interpretation that the new statistics are a signal to the Catholic Church, the foremost obstacle to a reasonable management of the country's population explosion, that its influence is waning among the poor in its effort to prevent them from resorting to contraceptives to reduce the number of their children.

The statistics should warn the Church that the poor, who comprise the majority of the population and who have the largest families among the social classes, are not paying attention to its injunctions against the use of contraceptives and similar birth-control methods, and are reducing the size of their families in response to the dire economic consequences of having too many mouths to feed.

The poor are voting on the issue of birth control on slender or empty pockets, and they are staging a silent rebellion against the Church's approach to population control. This rebellion should be a cue to conservative governments that the threat of the Church's political retaliation through denial of its support is a phantom and thus, there is no valid reason to be timid about pushing a population-control program.

The new statistics also suggest that the government could have more dramatic results in its poverty-reduction program if it pursues a more aggressive population-control program, and that such a program is not a political liability. There is a natural constituency for the program among the poor who appear receptive to easier access to contraceptives promoted by the state. There have been a number of issues on which Church and state (or government) interests have collided, among them constitutional revision, the ouster of President Macapagal-Arroyo, the opening of the mining industry to wider participation by foreign mining interests, *jueteng* and the ban on logging in primary forests, but population control cannot be a damaging issue for an administration pushing it aggressively.

It is an issue on which the Church cannot hold the administration hostage for fear of political fallout. The administration is more likely to lose in its conflict with the Church on issues other than on artificial birth control. Population control is an issue with which the government could broaden its constituency among the poor. Whatever the Church says, the poor are likely to avail themselves of any means to lift themselves from poverty. The number of children they will have in their families will be determined by economics. The upper classes have already made their own decisions in determining their social and economic mobility. They have fewer children than the poor. Economics determined their decisions.

According to Neri, Neda's 1.94 percent target will enhance the country's chances of hitting its poverty-reduction target over the medium term. The target is to reduce the proportion of the population living below the poverty line from 45.3 percent in 1991 to 22.7 percent by 2015. The proportion of the population living in poverty in 2003 stood at 30.4 percent. With this reduction rate, the Philippines has virtually paid lip service to its commitment, under the Millennium Development Goals of the United Nations, to reduce the number of people living in poverty to 22.7 percent of the population.

Neri has therefore no reason to crow over the 1.95 rate of population growth. The Arroyo administration had nothing to do with it. The government has washed its hands of the population-control program by entrusting to local governments the responsibility for the determination of "appropriate measures." It has passed the buck to local governments in order to avoid the political repercussions arising from the Church's opposition to the program through its nationwide network of parishes.

The main source of contraceptives in the country is foreign donation, particularly from the United Nations Population Fund. There is no government machinery that provides free access to contraceptives and information about family planning and birth control.

What about the teenage mom?

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

THIS PAPER CARRIED A HEARTWARMING "POsitive" story on the front page yesterday about a family (a widow and her two adult children) living in an urban poor area in Vitas, Tondo, who, despite their meager daily budget of P50 a day, adopted the unwanted baby boy of a teenage mother.

The story, written by Christian Esguerra, traced the background of the adoption of Sandin Lee, who has just turned one. His birth mother, then 18 years old and pregnant with her second child, had told Sally Ruiz, 58, the adoptive mother-to-be, that she wanted to undergo an abortion, feeling she wasn't up to the demands of parenthood. Sally, a counselor on natural family planning in her area, told Esguerra she was in the throes of an "empty nest" syndrome herself, yearning for company since her two adult children were away at work for most of the day, and so thought of adopting the girl's child. It was also her way of ensuring that the girl did not push through with her planned abortion, she said.

In one part of his story, Esguerra said the story behind the boy's adoption "illustrates the continuing battle between the 'pro-life' camp, which frowns on contraception or abortion as a means of controlling population growth, and the 'pro-choice' sector, which advocates a strong information campaign and the availability of family planning methods to couples."

* * *

I BEG to disagree.

Sandin's story illustrates, for me, the need precisely for a strong information campaign on reproductive health and family planning, and for the availability of services, particularly to poor young women like Sandin's mother. (Besides, neither does the "pro-choice sector" believe that abortion should be pushed as a "family planning" method.)

What kind of counseling did Sandin's mother receive in school, at home or from other significant adults in her life? Being a teenager, was she able to access full and accurate information on relationships, sexuality and the means to protect herself from the unwanted consequences of unprotected sex, such as pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections?

I applaud Sally and her two children for opening their home and their hearts to Sandin, and I can only admire their courage and generosity in taking in a child and deciding to raise him despite knowing that it meant putting further strain on their limited resources. Adoption is indeed a most wonderful solution to unwanted births and pregnancies, giving both child and adoptive parents what they most need and want: a family. But with the number of unwanted—mistimed, unplanned pregnancies exceeding 50 percent in this country, adoption is hardly a practical response. It may make for wonderful human-interest stories, but it is hardly the rational, effective program that our population problem demands.

The story on Sandin contains a cautionary note, in fact. The boy's biological mother showed up recently to look in on the boy, and she was not just accompanied by a new boyfriend, but was pregnant with another child. Sally and Sandin may have made it to the front pages, but who's looking out for Sandin's mother and the children she may yet bear?

* * *

THERE seems to be more behind the sacking of Salvacion "Sally" Bulatao, who until recently was head of the National Dairy Authority (NDA). Malacañang issued a press release last week announcing the dismissal of officials who were allegedly found guilty of graft and corruption, Bulatao among them.

Ceres Doyo yesterday detailed the charges lodged against Bulatao as well as her reply to them, and what strikes the reader most sharply is the relatively puny nature of her alleged offenses, and the very reasonable explanations she offered.

What Doyo did not mention is that Sally's husband Gerry, who apart from being an "activist and intellectual" has also previously served as an undersecretary at the Department of Agrarian Reform, is also one of the convenors of the Black and White Movement, a broad coalition of groups and individuals advocating good governance, including ferreting out the truth behind the "Hello Garci" controversy.

Malacañang will, of course, have perfectly reasonable-sounding explanations not just for Sally's dismissal, but also the destruction of her reputation and good name. Meanwhile, a Black and White spokesperson wonders: "What is the PAGC doing about people like Joc Joc Bolante? What is the Ombudsman doing about the Comelec? Absolutely nothing."

* * *

A MASS of the Resurrection will be held at 9 this morning at the Miriam College Chapel in memory of Sr. Miriam Thomas Thornton, MM, 96, who passed away last May 7.

Sr. Miriam Thomas is best remembered in the Philippines as having served as president of Maryknoll College from 1968-1976. When the Maryknoll Sisters decided to relinquish control of the college to a board composed of lay people, the choice of the new name "Miriam College" for the institution was attributed, in part, to the esteem with which the community and alumni held Sr. Miriam Thomas.

She spent much of her religious life in the Philippines, which was her first mission assignment in 1934, serving as a high school teacher in Baguio until 1942 when she was interned in Los Baños along with other Americans until 1945. After the war, she taught in Lucena and in the Quezon City campus, leaving for the United States for further studies and to take on other duties, until her return to the country in 1968.

Ill health necessitated her return to Maryknoll, NY in 1996 where she entered Residential Care. Sr. Miriam Thomas had been a Maryknoll Sister for 76 years, and was buried in the Sisters cemetery yesterday.

Lost in translation

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

THERE ARE SO MANY HISTORICAL ASSOCIAtions in the country that one will find it hard to count them all. Three are national: Philippine Historical Association, Philippine National Historical Society and Adhika. The rest are local, and the two most active in terms of activities and publications are the Kapampangan Studies Center and the Cavite Historical Society.

Last Friday, I found myself in Fort San Felipe, Cavite City, which is run by the Philippine Navy. This is the site of the historic uprising that led to the execution of Fathers Gomez, Burgos and Zamora in 1872. This had completely slipped my mind when I accepted the invitation to deliver remarks during the launch of yet another publication of the Cavite Historical Society, "Chabacano Studies: Essays on Cavite's Chabacano Language and Literature," by Emmanuel Luis A. Romanillos. Thus, it was a double treat to walk around what is left of historic Fort San Felipe and also to hear a dialogue that highlighted spoken Cavite Chabacano, which is Spanish-based, and Ternate Chabacano, which is Portuguese-based.

There is so much history embedded in language it's a pity that the use of Chabacano has dwindled when it used to be widely spoken in Zamboanga, Cavite and pre-war Ermita. The few instances I heard snatches of Chabacano when I was growing up was when some old people played cards or mahjong. The late former mayor of Zamboanga, Maria Clara Lobregat, kept a pile of Chabacano dictionaries by her desk to give as gifts to friends and visitors. I regret not browsing through it, because during the recent negotiations for the RP-Mexico Joint Commission on Cultural and Educational Cooperation in Mexico City, our man from the Department of Foreign Affairs taught us some invented Chabacano phrases to confound our Mexican counterparts. The most memorable of these were: "Cosa ba ese?" (translation: *Ano ba iyan?*), "morisqueta tostada" (*sinangag*) and my favorite, "No se con vosotros!" (*Ewan ko sa inyo!*). Sounds Spanish, but if you have a good ear, you will notice that it is not quite Spanish.

When Cesar E.A. Virata, president of the Cavite Historical Society, invited me to deliver remarks at the book launching, I accepted without thinking, presuming wrongly that the book would be yet another Chabacano grammar or dictionary that one did not read from cover to cover. These books are best consigned to the reference shelf and consulted only when needed. To prepare, I read a postcard in Chabacano that Rizal sent Pedro Paterno and, of course, the hilarious Chabacano dialogue preserved in Chapter 28 of "El Filibusterismo" that, more often than not, gets lost in translation. I planned to display some erudition at the launch, only to have the rug pulled from under my feet because when the book arrived in the office, the day before, I saw that the author had tackled Rizal and Chabacano in his work.

Having re-read Rizal and Chabacano so closely, Romanillos found some interesting items that slipped by me because these tend to be "lost in translation" as well. For example, in a letter from Evaristo Aguirre to Rizal, dated May 1887, is a line that reads: *"lintic!: bueno sana topa rayo con todo este mga jindut de cachichao!"* In the 1961 English translations of Rizal's correspondence, Encarnacion Alzona rendered this rude line as: *"Lintic!* It will be good if lightning strikes these *Castilas!"* In a footnote that should not be overlooked, Romanillos remarked, "According to Cavite City folks, the vituperative phrase *mga jindut di cachichao* literally means 'persons with f—g foul-smelling feet' which Alzona's imaginative translation refers to Castilians!"

Romanillos also found another example of something lost in translation in the textbook biography of Rizal by Gregorio and Sonia Zaide. To magnify Rizal's linguistic gifts, they cited a letter Rizal wrote to Fernando Canon in July 1887, describing the nationalities of 50 different passengers traveling with him on the steamer Djemnah and stated that Rizal was the only Filipino on board and that being multilingual he acted as interpreter in this floating Tower of Babel. While the Zaide tandem over-read by stating that Rizal acted as translator for others, they also under-read by ignoring the two other Chabacano-speaking Filipinos [early OFWs?] on board that Rizal engaged in a game of chess. The Zaides also missed out on two English prostitutes accompanying three Chinese men: in Rizal's racial catalogue, he recorded *"3 chinos con dos p. inglesas."* One can guess the four-letter word abbreviated by Rizal here.

The Romanillos book not only situates Cavite Chabacano in its proper socio-historico-cultural context, it also provides an anthology of Chabacano literature for our appreciation. The rhymes on food are particularly fascinating. Language as a mirror of culture and society once made me consider linguistics as a field of specialization, but when I realized that linguistics took the humanities out of language and reduced it to abstract, almost algebraic, symbols, I gave up.

Through this surprisingly readable book, we hope other researchers will follow suit, to broaden not only our knowledge of languages but also our knowledge of ourselves as Filipinos.

* * *

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu

Global mamas

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

FILIPINOS LIKE TO BOAST ABOUT HOW MUCH WE LOVE our mothers, but I've often wondered how much of that loving translates into real caring.

The other day, I stumbled upon the "State of the World's Mothers" report for 2006 compiled by Save the Children USA. Apparently, they've been doing this global report card for a few years now, rating and ranking countries as to how mother-friendly they are by using several indicators, which I'll describe shortly.

Before looking at the indicators let's look at the Philippines' ranking for the Mothers' Index, relative to the world, and to Asia. Globally, among 125 countries, the Philippines ranked almost exactly midway at 63rd. Other Asian countries had the following ranks: Japan was 12th, China and Thailand 39th, Vietnam 44th, Malaysia 52nd, Indonesia and Sri Lanka 69th, India 93rd, Laos 94th, Bangladesh 106th, Cambodia, Nepal and Pakistan 107th.

How was the Mothers' Index constructed? Save the Children combined several indicators to construct a Women's Index and a Children's Index, which were then combined to yield the Mother's Index. This research method makes some sense since a mother's situation depends on how she is treated as a woman, and how much of support services are available for children.

The indicators for the Women's Index are lifetime risk of maternal mortality, percent of births attended by skilled personnel, percent of pregnant women with anemia, percent of women using modern family planning, literacy rate for adult females and percent of national government seats held by women.

For the Children's Index, the indicators are infant mortality rate (how many children die before the age of one), percent of children enrolled in primary school, percent of population with access to safe water and percent of children under the age of 5 who suffer from moderate or severe nutritional wasting.

Certainly, the indicators themselves will have limitations. For example, the percentage of women with national government seats is very important for advancing women's (and mothers') concerns but, as we only too sadly know in the Philippines, even having a woman President does not necessarily mean we have a champion for women's issues.

Mother friendliest

I'm sure we can all think of many other indicators we'd like included in both the Women's Index and Children's Index, but when you're trying to compare more than a hundred countries, you have to be quite selective in choosing the indicators.

The global report card for mothers does allow us to draw some insights as to how countries might become more mother friendly. When I first glanced at the rankings, I could already tell that the situation of mothers does not correlate with a country's economic status.

The oil-rich Middle Eastern countries ranked lower than the Philippines (Saudi Arabia was a dismal 83rd). The United States, the world's most economically powerful country, only ranked 10th with the Mothers' Index because its health care system is so deficient. US infant mortality rate, for example, is even higher than those of some developing countries.

Similarly, Japan, the world's second largest economy, only ranked 12th in the Mothers' Index, the poorest performer among industrialized countries. This shouldn't be surprising since women's status continues to lag far behind men's in that bastion of male conservatism. The contraceptive pill, for example, was not approved in Japan until a few years ago, with Japanese women's groups grumbling that it took their government more than 30 years to do so and less than a year to allow Viagra for the men.

Not surprisingly, the Scandinavian countries topped the league for mothers, with Sweden leading the pack, followed by Denmark and Finland. These social-welfare states are well known for their package of benefits for mothers, including maternal leaves for as long as two years.

If you look at the Asian countries that do well in the Mothers' Index, you'll find that they too generally have strong state-supported social services. Note that it isn't just health services that count. Save the Children's report has extensive discussions on the importance of girls' access to education. Countries where girls are taken out of schools early will also fare poorly with women's and children's health.

Surrogate mothers

Being midway in the global rankings tells us we're not doing too badly, but we certainly can do much more. Our health centers are good, with services like immunizations and prenatal care, but we're neglecting one vital area, which is family planning. A new twist to this neglect is the way we seem to want to wish away the problem, through the statistics. The INQUIRER's front page yesterday quoted Socio-economic Secretary Romulo Neri as claiming that the population growth rate has dropped. But how can he make this claim when we haven't had a national census since the year 2000, canceling the 2005 census supposedly because government had no money?

Our mothers deserve more than headline statistics and publicity gimmicks, like the city of Manila herding in more than 3,000 mothers so it could claim a new world record of simultaneous breastfeeding. This in a city that bans the promotion of "artificial" family planning in its health centers.

There is one indicator that is important if we really want to assess our situation, and this is the number of mothers who are forced, by economic circumstances, to work overseas, separated from their children. I have no exact figures by I am certain this runs into a million at the very least. We have to remember, too, it's not just overseas work that separates mothers from their children; many of our rural women end up working in urban households as domestic helpers, leaving their children behind.

This Mother's Day, in many countries throughout the world, children will be honoring Filipino nannies and housekeepers who have become their second mothers. Many Filipinas aren't just global nannies, they're now global *nanays*, global mamas, often at great cost to their own children back home. This Mother's Day then, we would do well to honor the country's many surrogate mothers—the aunts, grandmothers, godmothers, adoptive mothers and many others, men included—who try to fill the vacuum, no questions asked, no conditions on the love for the children they've taken into their homes.

The INQUIRER is a member of the
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Filipino dishes now a 'Dutch treat'

I READ THE ARTICLE ON KULINARYA, "Four chefs serve a smorgasbord of food ideas (2)," (PDI, 5/7/06) with great interest because I enjoy cooking Philippine dishes and I take great pride at what we can offer the world.

Not much is known about Philippine dishes over here and so a lot of people were amazed when I introduced them to Bicol express and *laing*, among others. Now, these dishes are simply "must-haves" every time I invite my Dutch in-laws as well as friends and colleagues.

I believe that dishes with coconut milk and chilis should also get priority in the 40 selected menus for showcase in the international market as they simply capture the expectations about Asian and, in particular, Philippine dishes.

—MARIA LUISA PRESTADO,
mprestado@hotmail.com

Canada celebrates its cultural diversity

AS A FILIPINO-CANADIAN, I WAS appalled by what a Canadian "educator" and school principal made a 7-year-old boy suffer for using a spoon and fork to eat. I've lived in Canada for 20 years and never did any of my teachers or peers belittle me for my cultural practices.

I am proud to say that Canada is a multicultural country and is proud to celebrate diversity. However, what the two school officials did to the boy showed pure and utter ignorance and prejudice.

Please let everyone know in the Philippines that there are good people and teachers (I'm one of them) in Canada, and that not everybody thinks the same way as the two in that school in Montreal.

—GINA GARCIA-ROSI,
ginagarcia_rosi@telus.net

Regional wage boards decide wage-hike petitions in 30 days

THE NATIONAL WAGES AND PRODUCTIVITY Commission (NWPC), an attached agency of the Department of Labor and Employment, would like to clarify some points in the news item "Wage boards blamed for workers' plight." (PDI, 5/4/06)

According to the report, the legislators blamed the regional wage boards for their failure to alleviate the plight of the workers in the last 16 years. The charges of some labor groups that the wage boards have become "pro-capitalist" are misplaced. The wage boards' tripartite composition ensures fair and adequate representation of the interests of labor, management and government. Besides, before issuing wage orders, the wage boards are required to conduct public hearings and deliberations.

Some quarters have accused the wage boards of being slow to act on wage petitions. On the contrary, records show that the wage boards take, on the average, 45 days from the first public hearing to issue wage orders—well within the 75-day period prescribed by law. In 2005, the regional boards were able to issue their new wage orders within the 30-day deadline given by President Macapagal-Arroyo. Aside from that, of the 170 wage orders issued by the boards since their creation, 104, or 61 percent, were issued motu proprio, meaning the boards themselves initiated the action or inquiry to determine the need for a wage issuance, despite the absence of a petition. It may be noted that the P125 across-the-board wage hike that has been regularly filed before Congress since 1999 has yet to be approved.

May we also clarify the reports that the regional wage boards only granted token increases in wages and allowances, thus failing to mitigate the impact of rising prices. One of the criteria used by the boards in determining fair and reasonable wage adjustments is the increase in the prices of basic goods and services. In the National Capital Region, the increases granted are almost always higher than the amount needed to compensate for the rise in prices of goods and services. Since the creation of the regional boards, the minimum wage in the NCR has been raised by a total amount of P261 per day for every non-agricultural worker.

In closing, may we say that we welcome the suggestion of our legislators to review the relevance of RA 6727 (the law that created the wage boards) and its implementing policies and rules to make it more responsive to the present requirements of the labor market.

For one, the rules on "supervening conditions" and exemption from compliance, which are more than 10 years old, may have to be reassessed and modified. Rest assured, however, that the NWPC and its regional boards will remain steadfast in providing a decent standard of living for our workers, while ensuring the continued viability of business, our primary employment generators.

—REBECCA J. CALZADO,
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National Wages and Productivity Commission,
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Let debate begin

VOICES ON INQ7.NET

THE OPPOSITION SHOULD THINK ABOUT other things to do other than bring President Macapagal-Arroyo down. She is the President and there is nothing the opposition can do "legally" that can change that.

It is time for the opposition to put down the sword and start thinking about how to move the country forward. It could make better use of its time, brain power, influence and resources to bring out ideas to improve the state of the nation.

But the opposition has this paranoia that Ms Arroyo would steal democracy and perpetuate herself and her minions in power. Does it really think the Filipino people will buy that?

We did not take to the streets and remove our previous corrupt leaders just so another dictatorial leader could take over. The opposition must understand that those repressive days are over.

Our democracy is young but it is not in danger. If it were, Ms Arroyo would be the reason and the people would once again take to the streets and defend it with their lives.

If there is anything Ms Arroyo should fear, it is the people's wrath and the verdict of history if she curtails our freedoms.

So, to the opposition: Please focus on something else. Enough of this misplaced, counterproductive activism. If you really want to fight Ms Arroyo and make her irrelevant, fight her in the arena of ideas. Fight her by proposing economic and social policies that are better than hers. And then let the people decide which ideas are best for them.

Let the great policy and ideas debate to bring tangible hope begin!**—E. PIO GOCO, Reston, Virginia (via e-mail)**

* * *

President Arroyo should not resign but she should reform. The First Gentleman should avoid publicity by keeping a low profile. He is one of the major reasons the President is very unpopular. He might be a good person but there are so many negative issues hounding him.

I still think President Arroyo is better than what the opposition can offer. The peso is appreciating and our credit rating is improving.

The opposition should concentrate on constructive criticism and not waste its time thinking of ways to unseat the President. Its time will come. It must learn to be patient.

To our President: Please prove the opposition wrong.**—Ronald Octavian C. Giongco (via e-mail)**

* * *

We can get mad at everyone but that is not going to solve the country's problems. For all we know, we are the problem, the sector of the society that has brought us to where we are now.

Our population is over 85 million. Forty years ago, it was only 30 million. Nobody got hungry, there was so much to eat and we even gave aid in the form of rice to countries like Thailand. Now, food production in our country is getting less and less while the population is exploding.

Who is encouraging the people to go and multiply and does nothing to help solve the country's problem? The Catholic Church has to act to save this country.**—Romeo Lagamo, Honolulu (via e-mail)**

* * *

Charter change to avert political crisis in the Philippines—let's give it a shot. I believe it will work. We need to change a lot of things in our Constitution, as it was copied from the American Constitution and we are not America.

It is stated in the Constitution that any Filipino citizen can run for office regardless of background. But we need educated people in government, not people who happen to be famous. I propose that no one be allowed to run for office unless he or she has a college degree.**—Rachelle Navarra (via e-mail)**

IF you have any complaints, grievances or suggestions about the treatment of news and photos by the Inquirer, you may write to the Readers' Advocate, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue, corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, City of Makati or send a fax to Nos. 897-4793, 897-4794, or e-mail readersadvocate@ inquirer.com.ph

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Across the NATION

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Text us your feedback: inquirer atn name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart) *Assistant Editor* **Tony Bergonia**

SUPERLOTTO 6/49
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₱8,000,000.00

Traders say outage cost Cebu ₱100M in losses

By Jhunnex Napallacan
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—THE EIGHT-HOUR BLACKOUT that hit Cebu on Wednesday had caused an estimated P60 million to P100 million in losses to the business sector in Metro Cebu.

Carlos Co, chair of the Cebu Power Core Group (CPCG), said this huge loss due to the power outage made it imperative for the Cebu private and government sectors to come together to find other means of meeting their power needs.

Co said many establishments—from retail stores to manufacturing firms—suspended operations due to lack of generator sets or because their generator sets were only designed to handle power outages lasting an hour or more.

Eric Mendoza, Mandaue Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI) president, said about 30 percent of the more than 8,000 business establishments in the city were forced to shut down because of the lack of power.

Robert Go, regional governor of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI-Central Visayas), said Cebu should not be dependent on power plants in Leyte or power coming from the Leyte-Cebu Interconnection Project (LCIUP).

Under the LCIUP or the Visayas grid, the islands of Leyte, Samar, Cebu, Bohol, Negros and Panay are interconnected via submarine cables, with geothermal power generated in Tongonan, Leyte as the main source of electricity.

Going on its own

Go said Cebu should have its own land-based power plants "so that we cannot be affected in future calamities of other areas like what had happened last Wednesday."

When a minor quake struck Leyte, the supply of power for Cebu automatically tripped off because Cebu relies on the LCIUP.

The emergency shutdown of the power plants in Barangay Tongonan in Ormoc City as a result of the tremor also caused blackouts in Leyte and Samar provinces (Eastern Visayas), Negros Oriental and Bohol (Central Visayas) and Negros Occidental and Panay Island provinces (Western Visayas). Only Siquijor was spared from the blackout as it was not connected to the Visayas grid.

"What's very important is that we should have land-based power plants so that we will not be dependent on the interconnection. Interconnection had actually solved the lack of power for Cebu, but we are too much dependent on interconnection," Go said.

Co, who is also the immediate vice president of the PCCI-Central Visayas, said a meeting would be called next week of members of the CPCG to discuss Cebu's power situation.

CPCG is composed of the Visayan Electric Company (Veco), National Transmission Corp. (Transco), National Power Corp. (Napocor), Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC), Cebu Private Power Corp., Toledo Power Corp. and the business sector.

Dependence

Cebu relies mainly on power supplied by the Leyte plants, using 360 megawatts of the 700 MW they produce.

Napocor's corporate staff specialist, Mosses Red, said Cebu's daily power consumption reaches 450 MW, with the balance provided by Napocor's power plant in Naga town and independent power suppliers Cebu Private Power Corp. and Mirant Philippines.

Eduardo Eroy, Napocor vice president for thermal generation and Visayas head, said power supply to the grid was fully restored by 6:11 p.m. Wednesday, about eight hours after the quake hit Leyte Island. *With a report by Nestor Burgos Jr., PDI Visayas Bureau*

WHAT'S INSIDE

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Republic of the Philippines
ZAMBOANGA CITY WATER DISTRICT
Pilar Street, Zamboanga City

SECTION I, INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Zamboanga City Water District, through its Bids and Awards Committee I (BAC I), invites Suppliers/Manufacturers to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project:

LOT NO.	BRIEF DESCRIPTION	APPROVED BUDGET FOR THE CONTRACT (ABC)	COST OF BID DOCUMENTS	DATE OF ISSUANCE OF BID DOCUMENTS	DATE OF PRE-BID CONFERENCE	DATE OF SUBMISSION/ OPENING OF BIDS
1	993 BAGS OF BEST QUALITY RICE (50 KG./SACK)	P 1,489,500.00	P 1,000.00	May 8-16, 2006	May 18, 2006	May 30, 2006
2	Water Meters sizes: ½", 2", 3" & 4"Ø	1,010,000.00	1,000.00	May 8-16, 2006	May 18, 2006	May 30, 2006
3	Assorted Brass Fittings	494,500.00	500.00	May 15-19, 2006	May 23, 2006	June 6, 2006
4	Genset 55KVA	1,300,000.00	1,000.00	May 15-19, 2006	May 23, 2006	June 6, 2006
5	Assorted PVC Pipes & Fittings	387,185.00	500.00	May 15-19, 2006	May 23, 2006	June 6, 2006

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules & Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act, and is restricted to organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, as specified in Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process of the Eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with lowest calculated bid (LCB) shall be advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine its responsiveness to the technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall be then awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.

Interested Bidders may obtain further information from the ZAMBOANGA CITY WATER DISTRICT and inspect the Bidding documents at the address given below during office hours (8.00 - 5:00pm).

Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below at or before 2:00 pm. May 30, 2006. All Bids must be accompanied by a *Bid Security in the form of Cash, Certified Check, Cashier's and Manager's Check and in the following amount: Lot 1: P14,895.00, Lot 2: 10,100.00, Lot 3: P 4,945.00 & Lot 4: P 13,000.00 & Lot 5: P3,871.85.* Late Bids shall not be accepted.

Bid Opening shall be on **May 30, 2006** at the 2nd Floor, ZAMBOANGA CITY WATER DISTRICT Main Office Building, Pilar St., Zamboanga City. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidder's representative's who choose to attend at the address below.

The ZAMBOANGA CITY WATER DISTRICT reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all Bids at any time or prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

ZAMBOANGA CITY WATER DISTRICT
Mr. Noel M. Kawaguchi
Pilar St., Zamboanga City 7000
Telephone No. (062) 991-1556
Email:
Fax: (062) 991-2799

(Sgd.) ARNULFO A. ALFONSO
BAC I Chairman

(PDI—May 12, 2006)

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Transportation and Communications
CIVIL AERONAUTICS BOARD
OLD MIA ROAD, PASAY CITY
METRO MANILA

A Century of bringing the Pilipinas closer together through better transportation and communications

IN RE : APPLICATION FOR ISSUANCE OF FOREIGN AIR CARRIER'S PERMIT (FACP) UNDER THE LIBERALIZED CHARTER PROGRAM

HONGKONG EXPRESS AIRWAYS LIMITED,
Applicant.

CAB CASE NO. 28084

x - x

NOTICE OF HEARING

Pursuant to the provisions of R A. 776, as amended, notice is hereby given that **HONGKONG EXPRESS AIRWAYS LIMITED** has filed with the Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB) an application for the issuance of Foreign Air Carrier's Permit under the Liberalized Charter Program. The initial hearing of the above entitled case will be held on **17 May 2006 at 2:00 P.M.** at the Conference Room of the CAB, Old MIA Road, Pasay City, Metro Manila before the undersigned Hearing Officer, at which hearing the applicant shall present its evidence.

The applicant is hereby required to have this Notice of Hearing published at least once a week for three (3) consecutive weeks in a newspaper of general circulation and that copies of this notice and the application itself be served upon Philippine Airlines, Inc., Cebu Pacific Air, Air Philippines Corporation, Asian Spirit and CR Airways, Ltd., either by personal service or by registered mail with return card at least five (5) days before the scheduled hearing.

Parties opposed to the granting of the application must file their written opposition on or before the date of the hearing, furnishing a copy of the same to the applicant, and appear at the hearing with such evidence as may be proper under the premises. Failure on the part of any interested party to file its opposition on time and appear at the hearing shall be construed as a waiver of its right to be heard and the Civil Aeronautics Board shall proceed to hear and decide this application on its merit.

Let a copy of this application and this Notice be posted at the CAB Bulletin Board beginning today.

21 April 2006
Pasay City, Philippines

MA. ELBEN SL. MORO
Hearing Officer

cc: ATTY. ANTHONY T. ZAMORA
Counsel for Applicant Hongkong Express Airways Ltd.
ZAMORA MIRAFLOR BRAVO & ASSOCIATES
Suite 707 Cityland 10 Tower I
Geronimo Street cor. Ayala Avenue North
Salcedo Village, Makati City

(PDI – April 28, May 5 & 12, 2006)

Republic of the Philippines
PHILIPPINE ECONOMIC ZONE AUTHORITY
MACTAN ECONOMIC ZONE I
Lapu-lapu City
Tel. Nos. 3400590, 3400594, 3400591: Telefax No. 3402949
Website: www.peza.gov.ph

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The **PHILIPPINE ECONOMIC ZONE AUTHORITY**, through its MEZ Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites all interested bidders to apply for eligibity and if found eligible, to bid for the hereunder contract:

Name of Contract : Proposed Asphalt Overlay Project of MEZ-Phase II
Location : MEZ I, Lapu-lapu City
Brief Description : Supply of Labor, Materials, Equipment and Supervision for Proposed Asphalt Overlay Project of MEZ-Phase II
Approved Budget for the Contract : P13,457,444.09
Contract Duration : 30 calendar days

Prospective bidders should possess a valid PCAB License applicable to the contract, have completed similar contract with a value at least 50% of the ABC within the last three years, and have key personnel and own equipment listed below available for the prosecution of the contract:

- Asphalt Batching Plant (production 50 M.T. per hr.)
- Asphalt Paver
- Asphalt Distributor
- Road Roller
- Pneumatic Roller
- Dump Trucks

The BAC will use non-discretionary pass/fail criteria in the Eligibility Check/Screening as well as in the Preliminary Examination of Bids. The BAC will conduct post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid. All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR).

The schedule of BAC activities is as follows:

1. Receipt from prospective bidders of Letters of Intent (LOI) with application for eligibility	May 12-23, 2006	
2. Issuance of Eligibility forms	May 15-24, 2006	
3. Receipt of Eligibility Requirements Deadline	May 25, 2006	5:00 p.m.
4. Notice of Result of Eligibility Check	June 5, 2006	
5. Issuance of Bid Documents	June 6-9, 2006	
6. Pre-bid Conference	June 13, 2006	2:00 p.m.
7. Receipt & Opening of Bids	June 29, 2006	2:00 p.m.

Eligibility Forms are available at MEZ BAC Secretariat, 2/F PEZA Administration Bldg., MEZ I, Lapu-lapu City upon submission of LOI, and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P500.00 to the PEZA Cashier. Prospective bidders shall submit the Eligibity Requirements to BAC at the stated address. They may also obtain the results of the Eligibility Check at the same address.

The Bidding Documents may be issued only to bidders declared by the BAC to be eligible, upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P5,000.00 to the PEZA Cashier.

The pre-bid conference and the opening of bids will be conducted at the Conference Room, 2/F PEZA Administration Bldg., Mactan Economic Zone I, Lapu-lapu City.

The PEZA reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process and reject all bids at any time prior to contract award without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidders or Bidders.

Approved by:
(Sgd.) BELENA B. SUELLO
MEZ BAC Chairperson

(PDI - May 12 & 19, 2006)

Name of the Procuring Entity
Local Government Unit of Claveria

Project Reference Number
Name of Project: Claveria WAHIG System
Location of Project: Claveria, Mis. Or.

Standard Form Number : SF-CONS-04
Revised on: 9 May 04
Standard Form Title : INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Local Government Unit of Claveria through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites consultants to apply for eligibility and shortlisting and if found eligible and shortlisted, to bid for the hereunder project:

Name of Project : Claveria WAHIG System
Brief Description : The proposed Claveria Wahig System will provide sufficient, safe and potable level III Water Supply System to 12 priority barangays and bulk supply of water at Barangay Poblacion. The project's major components include the development of intake structure, treatment facilities, a control room with related structures, installation of 44.45 km transmission facilities, installation of 43.53 distribution facilities, construction of 12 storage facilities, provision on metered connections, fire hydrants, valves fiting and other related appurtenances.
Approved Budget : 4 Million
For the Contract : Design and Construction Supervision of Claveria WAHIG System
Source of Funding : 20% LDF/Gen. Fund
Contract Duration : Detailed Engineering Design = 60 days
: Construction Supervision = until the completion of project

The list of minimum requirements is indicated in the Eligibility Form. Eligibility of prospective bidders shall be checked using a non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Shortlisting of eligible consultants will be done on the following criteria: experience of the consultant relative to proposed project, qualification of personnel and current workload. Not more than five (5) eligible bidders shall make up the short-list. The bid evaluation procedure to be adopted shall be **Quality Based Evaluation** with the following consideration and its corresponding weight percentage, to wit:

a.	Quality of pesonnal	30%
b.	Experience and capability	45%
c	Plan of approach and Methodology	25%
		100%

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, bid Security, performance Security, Pre-Bidding conference(s), Evaluation of bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of RA 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR).

Activities	Schedule
1. Deadline for submission of letter of intent and application for Eligibility	May 26, 2006
2. Issuance of eligibility Forms	May 26 - June 2
3. Deadline for the Submission of eligibility Requirements	June 2
4. Eligibility Checking	June 5
5. Results of Eligibility Check	June 13
6. Results of shortlisting	June 13
7. Pre-Bid conference	June 20
8. Issuance of Bid Documents	July 4 - 14
9. Deadline and Opening of Bids	July 17

The Eligibility Screening Form will be available at BAC Secretariat, located at Municipal Engineer's Office upon submission of a letter of intent and upon payment of a non-refundable amount of Three Thousand Pesos (P 3,000.00) for Eligibility forms to the Local Government Unit of Claveria. Submission and results of eligibility shall be in the same office. Bid Documents will be available only to shortlisted bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount P 20,000.00 to the Local Government Unit of Claveria. The Local Government Unit of Claveria assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

Approved by:
(Sgd.) JOHN REY A. TOMINES
BAC Chairman

(PDI—May 12 & 19, 2006)

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Govs want STL operations stopped, reviewed

Mayors' authority to allow lottery questioned

BACOLOD CITY—THE COUNTRY'S GOVERNORS want the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office to suspend the implementation of Small Town Lottery (STL) after they found that mayors could bypass provincial governments in allowing STL operations.

The League of Provinces of the Philippines questioned the PCSO's draft rules and regulations which provide that the provincial board's approval is no longer required if the league of municipal mayors allow STL in their towns.

Negros Occidental Gov. Joseph Marañon said the league believes this violates the Local Government Code of 1991 outlining the powers, duties and functions of the provincial government.

He said the governors were referring to a rule adopted by the PCSO that provides that the endorsement of the League of Municipalities, even without a Sangguniang Panlalawigan resolution, is sufficient to grant a franchise to STL operators.

Board powers

The Local Government Code requires the Sangguniang Panlalawigan to review 'ordinances and resolutions of municipal legislative boards. The league said this provision makes it necessary for STL operators to get the approval of provincial boards.

The league said many provinces are opposed to the operation of STL but the PCSO has began the pilot testing of STL in some provinces without securing the permission of governors or provincial boards.

In Negros Occidental, the provincial board opposed STL but its league of mayors endorsed the game.

Marañon said he believed that a dialogue between the mayors and the board members is needed.

He said he hasn't decided yet whether to accept or reject STL.

"Whenever I decide it will be for the greater good of the greater number," he said.

STL was set up by the PCSO as an alternative to the illegal numbers game, popularly known as "jueteng" in Luzon and *masiao* or daily double in the Visayas and Mindanao.

In Lucena City, the PCSO office asked all its sales agents and bet collectors to always wear identification cards to show policemen they were PCSO employees and not jueteng workers.

Leti Renomeron, PCSO-Quezon branch manager, made the appeal to agents and collectors after a Camp Crame-based anti-illegal gambling police unit raided a local STL station in Tiaong town on Tuesday and arrested 29 sales supervisors.

"It was not an illegal gambling operation. The police made the wrong raid and false arrests," she said.

According to Senior Insp. Nathaniel Villegas, head of the arresting team from the Anti-Illegal Gambling Special Operation Task Force, most of the suspects did not have IDs issued by the PCSO.

"I must admit, most of the STL collectors are bull-headed. We've already asked them so many times to always wear their IDs but they keep on ignoring us," Renomeron said.

Impressions

Senior Supt. Victorio Caragan Jr., Quezon police chief, said the place that was raided belonged to a compound owned by Tiaong Mayor Raul Umali. Umali has said it belonged to his mother who gets P300 in rent from STL.

Caragan said jueteng has stopped in the province and reports of jueteng making a comeback could be caused by the operations of STL.

Church leaders said STL is being used as a front for jueteng.

"Naturally, the impression would be that those (arrested) persons were jueteng collectors... They simply forgot to pin their identification cards," he said.

Quezon Board Member Isaias Ubana II assailed the police team that raided the STL station in Tiaong.

He said STL provides employment to people in Tiaong.

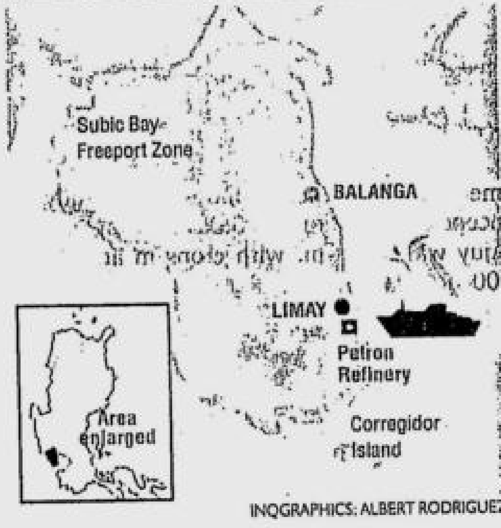
"The poor fellows that they arrested were just trying to earn a living...," said Ubana. *Carla P. Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau and Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

SUN BLESSED PHOTO FROM AMORE

Solar photovoltaic systems stand proudly in a village in Bongao, Tawi-Tawi that was a recipient of solar energy systems from the Alliance for Mindanao Off-Grid Renewable Energy (Amore). Alternative energy systems are bringing electricity to more and more remote areas in the country.

2 welders suffer burns as explosion rocks ship awaiting load of diesel

Bataan Oil tanker explosion



INQGRAPHICS: ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

BALANGA CITY—Two workers were hurt yesterday in an explosion that rocked an oil tanker while it was docked near an oil refinery in Limay, Bataan, Coast Guard officials said.

Jaime Rebuso, 43, and Pedrito Tanayday, 46, were treated for second degree burns at the Isaac and Catalina Medical Center here. Doctors said they were in stable condition.

Rebuso and Tanayday, both pipe fitters, were doing welding work on the tanker MT Daniella Trinidad docked near the Petron refinery port in Limay when the explosion occurred at about 8 a.m. The cause of the explosion was not immediately known.

The tanker was waiting for its turn to be loaded with diesel from the refinery, Coast Guard officials said.

It took Coast Guard personnel and fire fighters about an hour to put out fire that followed the explosion.

Coast Guard personnel were sent to the area for search and rescue operations.

The Coast Guard quoted investigators as saying the explosion occured in tank No. 5 of the ship, owned by Shogun Shipping Inc., where the workers were welding. The tank was empty, said the Coast Guard.

Lt. Commander Joseph Coyme, Coast Guard spokesperson, said there were no signs of a terror attack but an investigation was being conducted.

The ship had a gross tonnage of more than 2,000 tons.

"We heard the explosion and the tugboats here immediately went there. We do not know the exact cause of the explosion," Eric Locsin, a terminal officer, was quoted by Reuters as saying. *Greg Refraccion, PDI Central Luzon Desk and Leila Salaverria in Manila with Reuters*

Bishop asks mayors not to approve STL

By Carla P. Gomez
PDI Visayas Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—BISHOP VIcente Navarra of the Diocese of Bacolod yesterday appealed to mayors of Negros Occidental not to allow the operation of Small Town Lottery (STL) in their towns and cities.

"I am appealing to the conscience of our mayors because gambling will only aggravate poverty," the bishop said.

The bishop made this appeal after the league of municipal mayors in the province passed a resolution last week inviting the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) to operate STL in the 19 towns of Negros Occidental.

Navarra, however, warned that gambling would only foment laziness and encourage people to depend on luck. Gambling, he added, will also affect families.

On the other hand, the prelate commended the Negros Occidental Provincial Board for opposing STL.

The League of Municipalities of the Philippines (CMP)-Negros Occidental chapter, under Resolution No. 1 it passed on May 5, said it endorsed STL "after (a) thorough consideration of the benefits and advantages it could bring to the general populace."

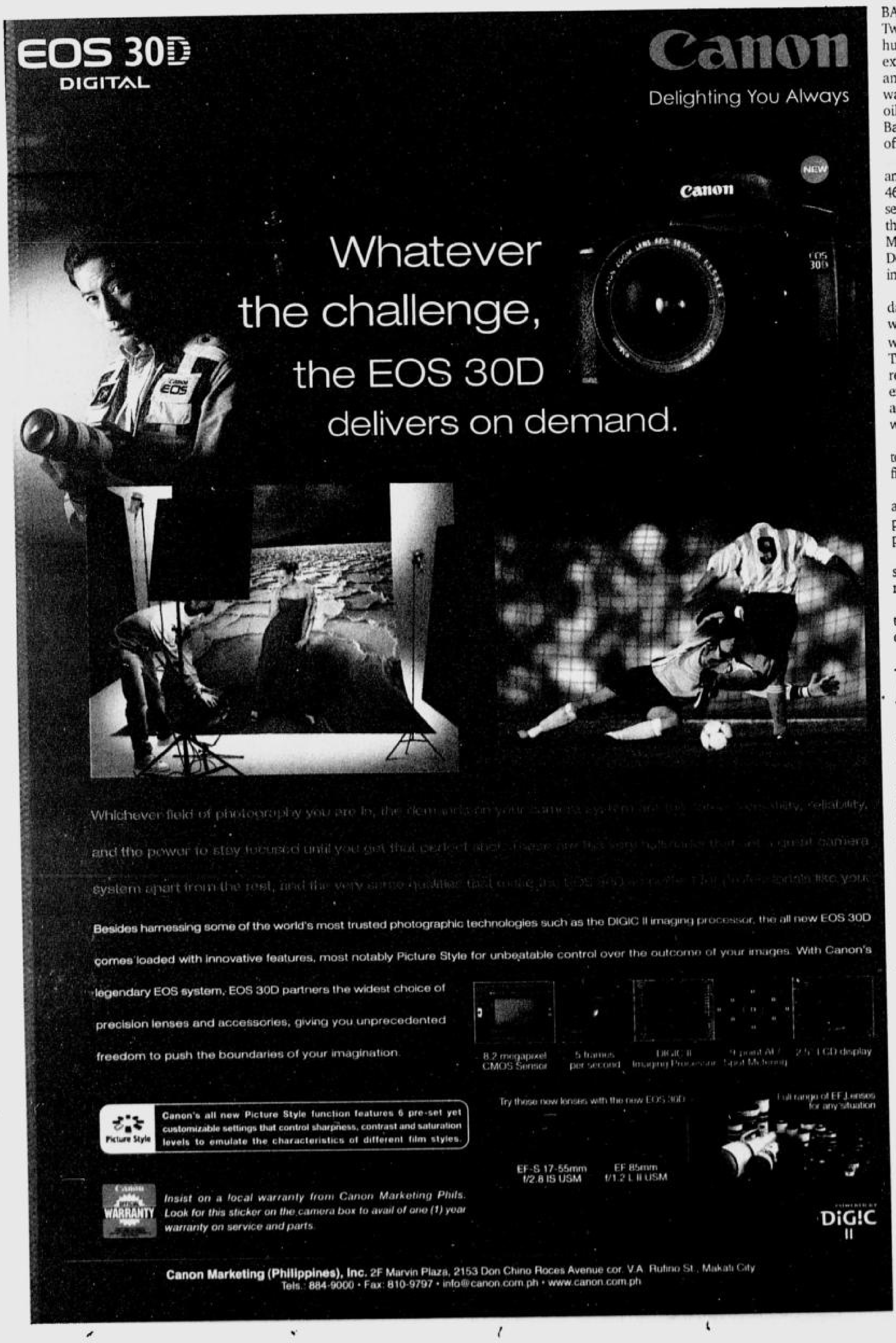
It added that STL would not only provide much-needed income for residents but also revenue to the host local government unit (LGU).

The operation of the STL ensures equitable income, the resolution further said.

"The earlier STL is implemented the better it will be for the countless number of our people who are in dire need of a legal means to derive gainful income," the resolution said.

A copy of the resolution, signed by Manapla Mayor Manuel Escalante III, the CMP-Negros Occidental president, and La Castellana Mayor Enrico Elumba, the secretary general, was submitted Friday to Gov. Joseph Marañon.

Marañon has yet to make a stand on STL, saying he would abide by the position to be taken by the League of Provinces on the matter.



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VILLAMOR VISAYA JR./PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

MACHO
A carabao that was tagged "PinakaMacho" draws the attention of visitors at the booth of San Agustin town in Ilagan, Isabela during the celebration of the province's 150th founding anniversary.

Mayor also charged with publisher's slay

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—STATE PROSECUTORS found probable cause to charge Mayor Jaime Ylarde of Dingalan, Aurora with murder for the slaying of a publisher last year.

The 11-page resolution by Prosecutors Cielitolindo Luyun, Misael Ladaga and Jose Pedro Navera was received by the family of Starline Times Recorder publisher Philip Agustin on the first anniversary of his death on Wednesday.

No bail was recommended for Ylarde, a former policeman.

In a phone interview, Navera said the prosecution panel amended the Jan. 26, 2006 information to include Ylarde in the charges.

Navera, citing a new order by Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez, said a prosecutor in Aurora would assume the case and file the charges at the Regional Trial Court Branch 66, in Baler, Aurora. The arrest warrant would come from the local court.

Navera said affidavits by witnesses and the extrajudicial confession by suspect-turned-witness Reynaldo Morete showed probable cause to include Ylarde in the charges. Morete claimed that the mayor ordered the killing of Agustin.

Agustin, 54, was gunned down after he delivered in Dingalan copies of the special edition of his news weekly. The paper featured his column and several stories about the mayor's alleged misuse of public and private funds for relief and rehabilitation programs for landslide victims.

The resolution came two months after Gonzalez created a new panel to review the case.

Relatives and supporters of Agustin contested an earlier recommendation by prosecutor Emmanuel Velasco to exclude Ylarde from the murder charges.

Ylarde did not answer calls and text messages from the INQUIRER. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Bugs keep Iloilo DA execs on alert

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—AGRICULTURE OFFICIALS said rice black bugs continued to infest plantations in Iloilo.

Agriculture regional executive director Jindra Linda Demeterio said the infestation had been "contained" but said it was not yet over.

She said farmers should remain vigilant.

The bug (*Scotinophara coarctata*), also known as the Malaysian black bug, attacks rice stems and yam. It kills plants by infesting the base of stems and draining them of sap, causing the plants to weaken. The stalks eventually wither and die.

Since the infestation was detected in March, the bugs have infested 1,410 hectares of farms, according to the Department of Agriculture's Regional Crop Protection Center.

The infestation has brought losses to 640 farmers in the northern Iloilo towns of Ajuy, Concepcion, San Dionisio, Sara and Dingle.

Ajuy was worst-hit with crops in at least 1,000 hectares of farms in eight barangays destroyed.

The DA was still determining the cost of damage to crops and the impact on rice production in the province, the country's second biggest rice producer. Iloilo's total production last year was 690,269 metric tons.

The DA and the provincial government have formed a multi-agency task force to stop the infestation.

Avoid culture shock, OFWs told

UWI NA KO SA PINAS!
ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

BAGUIO CITY—Sometimes, what seems to be a trivial difference over food preferences and diet could spell trouble between an employer and an overseas Filipino worker.

That's why Filipinos who are planning to work abroad should take the predeparture orientation seminar (PDOS) seriously to understand other cultures and to avoid "culture shock," according to officials of the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration here.

Delfina Camarillo, chief of the POEA Cordillera, said one of the issues confronting the OFWs was food deprivation. This could be perceived as a violation of one's basic rights but is actually a problem of communication between the employer and the employee, she said.

"Sometimes, our OFWs are too shy to ask their employers for a meal of their choice because they think their employers would get mad. There's a communication gap, but they should be open to their employers," she said.

This has become an issue because some foreign employers eat light meals compared to Filipinos who eat heavier meals, she said.

Camarillo said Filipinos, whose staple is rice, were finding it hard adjusting to a lighter diet served at their work sites.

"That is why those who are planning to work abroad should take the PDOS seriously to avoid encountering culture shock. There are OFWs who attend the PDOS just to comply with requirements. They should absorb what they are being taught in the seminar," she said in a forum here on Wednesday.

Aside from food preferences, the OFWs should also know the cultural norms of people in other countries to avoid conflicts, Camarillo said. In Saudi Arabia, for example, a Catholic is not allowed to carry a rosary or Bible in public.

Camarillo said the PDOS was one of the measures that could shield a jobseeker from abuses. The seminar, she said, could also make the jobseeker aware of his or her rights in foreign countries. *Desiree Caluza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

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Per DTI-NCR Permit # [illegible] Series of 2006

Sta. Rosa mayor unscathed as man shoots his vehicle

STA. ROSA CITY—MAYOR JOSE B. Catindig Jr. survived an assassination attempt Wednesday, in an attack that took place exactly a year after his predecessor was murdered.

Catindig was on his way to a meeting of the local Rotary Club in San Lorenzo Village in his Isuzu Crosswind (XRA 119) when a man with a pistol shot at the window of his vehicle on a narrow road in Barangay Dita at about 9:40 p.m.

The attack happened a year after then Mayor Leon Arcillas was gunned down by still unidentified assailants on May 10, 2005.

Then Vice Mayor Catindig succeeded Arcillas.

Catindig was unhurt in the ambush, but one of his four close-in security aides was wounded.

"It was a good thing I was able to hang my bulletproof vest on the car window. The bullet meant for me pierced the vest," Catindig told the INQUIRER.

Five other security aides of the mayor ran after the gunman, who fled on a motorcycle with another unidentified man.

They failed to catch up with the attackers who were seen headed for Cabuyao town.

Supt. Florendo Saligao, city police chief, said the gunman apparently knew that Catindig was scheduled to attend a meeting in the area and had waited for his convoy.

A few hours earlier, thousands of residents, relatives and followers of Arcillas joined a motorcade and Mass to honor him. Arcillas was regarded as the father of the modern Sta. Rosa, a former farming town 50 km from Manila.

Led by Vice Mayor Arlene Arcillas-Nazareno, the daughter of the murdered mayor, the group laid flowers and lit candles on the second floor of City Hall, where Arcillas was shot dead.

Forty days after the killing, Councilor Artemio Gomez, a known right-hand man of the late mayor, was shot and killed in front of his house.

Just two months ago, Jensen Cristobal, the city information officer and a close aide of Catindig, was gunned down in Makati City.

Police, though, ruled out politics in the death of Cristobal.

Superintendent Saligao said Catindig and other members of his family were brought to an undisclosed place for protection.

Police also sent more bodyguards for the mayor.

The assassination attempt was the fourth attack against ranking Sta. Rosa City officials in just a year.

Before the death of Arcillas, community leader Mely Carvajal, who led a group that exposed the alleged irregularities of his administration, was killed in front of her house.

Reports said Carvajal's death might be related to the killing of Arcillas, which was blamed by police on the communist New People's Army (NPA).

The NPA has denied having a hand in the murder. *Marlon Ramos and Romulo O. Ponte, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Court decides to revive Golden Buddha case

By Delmar Cariño
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

THE BUDDHA statuette, around which revolve legends and myths on treasure hunting and the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos, sits in a Baguio courtroom.
DELMAR CARIÑO/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

BAGUIO CITY—THE GOLDEN BUDdha controversy is expected to start a new chapter after a judge here decided to revive the hearing of a civil case involving a bronze plated statuette claimed to be a replica of the genuine Buddha.

The supposed connection of the late strongman Ferdinand Marcos' family to the Golden Buddha will take centerstage as Regional Trial Court Judge Fernando Vil Pamintuan issued an order on Tuesday directing former first lady Imelda Marcos and her daughter, Ilocos Norte Rep. Imee Marcos, to appear before the court on June 29.

Marcos was tagged as the mastermind behind the seizure of the Golden Buddha from its finder, Rogelio Roxas, a locksmith-turned-treasure hunter, on April 5, 1971, in his house here.

The Marcoses have repeatedly denied the charge.

Also to be issued subpoenas are Roxas' sons, Henry and Gervic; brother Jose; Albert Umali, president of the Treasure Hunters Association of the Philippines (Thapi); and the Office of the Solicitor General.

"The case has not been actually terminated. The hearing aims to make a final determination of the ownership of the Golden Buddha," Pamintuan told the INQUIRER on Wednesday.

"The statuette deserves a final destination," he said, referring to the statuette that had been in the court's custody for 35 years.

On May 9, Pamintuan ordered the transfer of the statuette from the court's evidence room to his courtroom.

"I hope that after the hearing, the Buddha statuette will be finally given to its rightful owner," he said.

The judge admitted that Mrs. Marcos and her daughter had not officially entered their appearance as parties interested in the case.

"But the former first lady came to the court before to see the Buddha and since her family is being dragged in this issue, I thought it would be best for her to appear during the hearing," Pamintuan said.

Imee Marcos is being summoned as an heir of her father, he said.

Asked if he would make a ruling as to whether the Buddha was a replica of the original Golden Buddha allegedly seized by Marcos, Pamintuan said: "No. As a judge I will not declare anything on that issue. We need evidence and law to do that."

The June 29 hearing will reopen the legal clashes between Umali and the OSG.

Umali said he should take home the statuette in the court's custody since Rogelio Roxas signed an agreement waiving his rights over the Golden Buddha in his favor.

The OSG wanted to keep the statuette since it could be part of the Marcoses' illegally acquired wealth.

Pamintuan will resume hearings on Civil Case No. 3383 filed by Jose Roxas on April 20, 1995, at the RTC Branch 3, which Pamintuan now presides.

Jose, 71, petitioned the court to release to him the statuette as a memento of his brother Rogelio's treasure hunting activities.

He testified before then Judge Romeo Brawner that his brother did not find a Golden Buddha.

Judge Antonio Reyes, who was assigned to handle the case when Branch 3 was vacated, decided on May 30, 1996 that no Golden Buddha existed and that the statuette in court was the one found by Rogelio.

RELATIVES and friends of landslide victims were the first visitors to the site after search and rescue teams left the area upon realizing that they could no longer find survivors. Visitors, who are just curious or wanted to condole with villagers who survived the landslide, came in buses, according to the governor of Southern Leyte.
PDI PHOTO

Guinsaugon becoming top S. Leyte tourist area

By Joey A. Gabieta and Jani Arnaiz
PDI Visayas Bureau

TACLOBAN CITY—THE SITE WHERE once lay the village of Guinsaugon in St. Bernard, Southern Leyte before it was wiped off the map by a massive landslide is becoming a tourist attraction.

Gov. Rosette Lerias said that since the Guinsaugon tragedy in February, hundreds of visitors had been going to the site to offer prayers and flowers for those who died in the landslide.

She said Guinsaugon had been visited not only by local tourists but also by foreigners. The last time she went to "Ground Zero," which was about two days ago, four busloads of tourists were in the area, she said.

With people coming from different places visiting Guinsaugon, Lerias said she would discuss with St. Bernard Mayor Maria Lim the construction of markers where they could pay respects to the dead and honor the volunteers.

St. Bernard is now the most visited town in the province, Lim said. With tourists now frequenting the site, she might just ask the former residents of Guinsaugon, who are now housed at the Christo Rey Regional High School, to engage in livelihood projects like candle and T-shirt making.

On Feb. 17, the entire farming village, occupying 323 hectares, was buried in boulders and mud from Mt. Kan-abag.

The entire area has been declared a sacred sanctuary by the provincial government, with Army soldiers from the 43rd Infantry Battalion guarding the village.

Several countries have extended assistance to the provincial and municipal governments to search for survivors and to help them and the families of those who died.

Three months after the tragedy, assistance continued to come for the victims of the landslide.

On Monday, Lerias was here to personally receive assistance from the Malaysian government, which was brought into the country by a Malaysian Royal plane.

She said she felt grateful that assistance was still pouring in. "It makes me feel really good that these people are helping us cope," she said.

The Malaysian donation, weighing about 10 tons, consisted of a ton of chocolate drinks, a ton of condensed milk, one-half ton of infant milk powder, a ton of canned muttons, a ton of canned beef, a ton of assorted biscuits, 300 units of cooking pots, 300 units of cooking pans, 500 packets of female sanitary pads, 500 packets of bath soap at 3 bars per packet, and instant noodles.

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

DOST Administrative Order No. 002
Series of 2006

SUBJECT : Guidelines in the Recovery of Costs of Products and Services of the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical And Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) Particularly in the Flight Folder Issuance and the Fee Structure Thereof

WHEREAS, the Republic of the Philippines is a signatory to the Convention on International Civil Aviation, ICAO Document No. 7300, otherwise known as the *Chicago Convention*, to further enhance agreement on certain principles and arrangements in order that international civil aviation may be developed in a safe and orderly manner and that international air transport services may be established on the basis of equality of opportunity and operated soundly and economically;

WHEREAS, the Philippines is a Member country of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and a Contracting State of the Convention on International Civil Aviation which designated the PAGASA as the Designated Meteorological Authority (DMA) of the Government of the Republic of the Philippines primarily taking charge to arrange for the provision of meteorological service for international air navigation on its behalf;

WHEREAS, various principles and methodologies are laid out in the ICAO and WMO guidance materials on cost recovery, namely: Manual on Air Navigation Service Economics (ICAO Doc. 9161), ICAO's Policies on Charges for Airports and Air Navigation Services (ICAO Doc. 9082) and WMO Guide on Aeronautical Meteorological Services Cost Recovery (WMO No. 904);

WHEREAS, pursuant to Executive Order No. 159, it is the goal of the government: (1) to promote full recovery of cost of services to free other government revenues for priority projects; and (2) to ensure equitable distribution of the burden of cost recovery by having the direct recipients of government services account for the costs;

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 54, Chapter 12, Book IV of Executive Order No. 292 (Administrative Code of 1987), heads of bureaus, offices or agencies, may, upon approval of the department head, charge and collect the cost of the services rendered by the bureau, office or agency concerned;

WHEREFORE, pursuant to the provisions of the issuances, the following rules and regulations for the implementation of collection of fees and charges for PAGASA products and services are hereby promulgated.

PART I
GENERAL PROVISIONS

Section 1. Title. These guidelines shall be known and cited as the PAGASA Flight Folder Issuance Fee Structure.

Section 2. Definition of terms and acronyms. - Unless defined otherwise, the following terms and acronyms shall refer to the definitions provided hereunder:

a. "PAGASA" refers to the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration. A service institute of the Department of Science and Technology mandated to undertake, *inter alia*, observation, collection, assessment and processing of atmospheric and allied data for the benefit of agriculture, commerce and industry.
b. "AMSO" refers to the Aeronautical Meteorological Service Office (or AeroMeteorological Service Office). An organic unit of the Weather Forecasting Section-Weather Branch mandated by law to issue Flight Documentation Folders to aeronautical users.
c. "WMO" refers to the World Meteorological Organization. A specialized agency of the United Nations purposely established to further the application of meteorology to aviation, shipping, water resources management, agriculture and other human activities, among others.
d. "ICAO" refers to the International Civil Aviation Organization. A specialized agency of the United Nations established to standardize, and establish International Standards, Recommended Practices and Procedures covering the technical field of aviation: licensing of personnel, rules of the air, aeronautical meteorology, and aeronautical charts, among others.
e. "DMA" refers to the Designated Meteorological Authority. The authority providing or arranging for the provision of meteorological service for international air navigation on behalf of a Member country. DMA is functionally referred to as "Service Provider".
f. "FOLDER" refers to the Flight Documentation Folder. It consists of written or printed documents, including charts or forms containing meteorological information for a flight.
g. "USER" refers to an entity or individual that utilizes a service furnished by the "Service Provider".
h. "FEES" refers to all charges and costs assessed against the direct recipients of specialized products and services provided by PAGASA in the exercise of its functions.
i. "AeriS" refers to AeroMeteorological Information System which is a sub-system of the WAFS-Meteorological Laboratory.
j. "PAGASA AeriS" refers to PAGASA's aeronautical meteorological information system developed through WAFS-MetLab.
k. "SYSTEM ADMINISTRATOR" refers to one who, as a primary job function, manages computer and network systems on behalf of another, such as an employer or client.
l. "FL" refers to flight level.
m. "hPa" refers to hecto-Pascal. A unit of measurement of atmospheric pressure.
n. "ETOPS" refers to Extended Range Operation with two engine airplanes.
o. "AERODROME" refers to a defined area on land, ice, or water (including any buildings, installations or equipment) intended to be used either wholly or partially for the arrival, departure; movement, or servicing of aircraft.
p. "ALTERNATE AERODROME" An aerodrome specified in the flight plan to which a flight may proceed when it becomes inadvisable to land at the aerodrome of intended landing.
q. "EN-ROUTE ALTERNATE AERODROME" refers to an aerodrome at which an aircraft would be able to land after experiencing an abnormal or emergency condition while en route.
r. "AERODROME OF DESTINATION" refers to an aerodrome at which an aircraft is designated to land.
s. "SARPs" refers to standards and recommended practices employed by both the ICAO and WMO.
t. "PROGNOSTIC UPPER-AIR CHARTS" refers to prognosticated ICAO standard isobaric upper-level charts composed mainly of forecast air-temperature, wind direction and speed usually with validity period of six (6) to thirty six (36) hours.
u. "SIGNIFICANT WEATHER CHARTS" refers to prognosticated weather charts for a designated level usually at FL250-630. It may contain forecasts of: cloud areas with indication of its tops; jet streams at different levels, volcanic activity/ash extent and location, frontal systems and its direction and speed and other meteorological information which may affect the safety of aircraft operations.
v. "WAFS" refers to the World Area Forecast System developed by ICAO and WMO to improve the quality and consistency of en-route guidance provided for international aircraft operations.
w. "TAFOR" refers to the complete description of the meteorological elements expected at and over the aerodome throughout the whole of the forecast period. it could be in a 9 or 24-hour validity period, including any changes considered to the significant to aircraft operations. It is prepared by trained staff (aeronautical meteorological forecaster), who, using the latest available regulations, ensure that internationally agreed practices are followed. This is one of the basic aeronautical meteorological information needed in flight planning for safety of the conduct of international or national air navigation.
x. "METAR" refers to the name code for an aviation routine weather report. In the Philippines, it is issued at hourly intervals. This type of report is one of the basic considerations in the formulation of a TAFOR.
y. "SPECI" refers to the name of the code for an aviation special weather report. A SPECI can be issued at any time when certain criteria are met. (see Appendix A)". This type of report is also one of the basic considerations in the formulation of a TAFOR"
z. "Service Provider" refers to PAGASA, as an entity that provides meteorological information to various users or customers."
aa. "Meteorological Information" refers to meteorological report, analysis, forecast, and any other statement relating to existing or expected meteorological conditions.

Section 3. Electronic Flight Folder Acquisition. Automated Flight Folder issuances shall be in place and shall be maintained by the PAGASA AeriS Systems Administrator utilizing its FTP service. Authorized Users shall be given a username and password to gain access to the necessary Folder.

Section 4. Folder Preparation and Formulation. The Folder shall be prepared and formulated in advance by the AMSO throughout the 24-hour period.

Section 5. Folder Availability. The designated Forecaster shall post the latest Folder at the designated PAGASA website two (2) to three (3) hours prior to the intended time of departure.

Section 6. Flight Schedule; contents. The User shall be responsible for the submission of the frequency of Folder issuance (daily, weekly or monthly) within a period of seven (7) working days prior to the effectivity of the schedule. The flight schedule shall contain the (a) time of departure; (b) aerodrome of departure; (c) alternate aerodrome (including take-off alternate, en-route alternate, ETOPS en-route alternate); and (d) aerodrome of destination.

Section 7. Unscheduled, Re-scheduled and Cancelled Flights. Requests for flight Folder outside the submitted schedule or for re-scheduled flights must be made at least twelve (12) hours before the intended time of departure.

Section 8. Folder Structure. The general structure of a flight documentation folder must be made in accordance with the standard format prescribed in the WMO and ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices. It is categorized into International Flight Folder; and Domestic Flight Folder.

International Flight Folder shall be composed of the following items:

a. Multi-level prognostic upper-air charts, i.e. FL300 and FL390, with validity period of twenty four (24) hours or more;
b. Significant Weather Chart, i.e. FL250 - 630, with a validity period of twelve (12) hours;
c. Compiled list of Terminal Aerodrome Forecast (TAFOR) of each of aerodrome of departure, destination, alternate, en-route alternate, take-off alternative, ETOPS en-route alternate and destination alternate.

Domestic Flight Folder shall be composed of the following items:

a. Multi-level prognostic upper-air charts or a choice of two of the following:
    i. Surface (10 meter level);
    ii. 1000 hPa level; 850 hPa level; and
    iii. 700 hPa level
b. Significant Weather Charts valid up to twelve (12) hours of the following levels:
    i. Medium level 700 hPa to 400 hPa or FL100 to FL250;
    ii. Low-level - Surface to 700 hPa or SFC-FL100;
    iii. Compiled list of Terminal Aerodrome Forecast (TAFOR) of each of aerodrome of departure, destination, alternate, en-route alternate, take off alternate.

PART II
FEES

Section 1. Schedule of Fees. The fees prescribed in this Section are applicable to the products and/or services and materials furnished by the AMSO.

Schedule of Fees

Reference Code	Product/Service Type	Cost
IFF	Flight Documentation Folder for International Flights	US$ 15.00
DFF	Domestic Folder for Domestic Flights (Commercial)	P100.00

Section 2. Billing. The Accounting Section shall bill the User on a monthly basis. The statement of Account shall be issued by the PAGASA AeriS system administrator containing, among others, the description of products and services, corresponding cost computed based on the prevailing exchange rate at the time of rendition of service.

Section 3. Delinquent payment; surcharge. Payments made after fifteen (15) days from bill date shall be assessed a surcharge of one percent (1%) of the total amount due.

Section 4. Folder access suspension. Users are entitled to thirty (30) days grace period within which to settle their accounts. Beyond which their access to the flight folder shall be suspended. The suspension will be lifted three (3) days after the User has satisfactory settled in full his accountabilities which includes his unpaid account plus the corresponding surcharge.

Section 5. Fees Collected. The fees collected by PAGASA from the Users pursuant to this Department Order shall be deposited to the National Treasury.

PART III
MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

Section 1. Periodic Review of Fees. The PAGASA Flight Folder fee structure shall be reviewed whenever necessary provided that the rates of fees herein provided may be increased only once a year, unless otherwise required by law, executive orders, rules and regulations, and other issuance.

Section 2. Revision of Fees. Notice of revision of fees shall be given to users or their duly authorized representatives at least four (4) months prior to the intended revision. During the said period, users may submit their views and/or comment to the service provider.

Section 3. User Consultation. Consultation with the Users shall be done as frequent as necessary to gauge the cost effectiveness of the service and/or product.

Section 4. Separability Clause. If any provision of this Department Order is declared unconstitutional, illegal or invalid, the other parts not affected shall continue to be in full force and effect.

Section 5. Effectivity. This Department Order shall take effect immediately after its publication in a newspaper of general circulation.

(Sgd.) ESTRELLA F. ALABASTRO
Secretary

(PDI - May 12 & 19, 2006)

Doubts raised over population drop report

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funds for it.

"That was your interpretation, but you stated it as a matter of fact," Remulla told the INQUIRER. "It is highly unbelievable that the population growth rate would slow down from 2.36 percent to 1.94 percent without a government population program in place."

Ernesto Pernia, an economics professor at the University of the Philippines, said he doubted the validity of the NSCB projection because it did not jibe with physical observations. He described the government's efforts to control population as "practically nil."

But Pernia said that if the government's projection was correct, the Philippine economy would still be unable to sustain it.

He said the annual population growth should slow down to as low as 1.6 percent for the economy to sustain its entire population.

6-year-old data

Remulla cautioned government officials against making major policy decisions on population and the economy based on projections garnered from "6-year-old data" and "assumptions" that might or might not have occurred.

But Lina Castro, director for the NSCB social statistics office, said the 1.95-percent population growth rate was a projection for the five-year period starting 2005.

She clarified that it was not the actual population growth slowdown last year, as earlier reported.

Castro also said the projected slowdown was based on actual historical trends on declining fertility rate and increasing contraception use among Filipino women.

"[The government has] a population-management program. There is an intensive campaign [for family planning] by the Department of Health and local governments," she said.

'Irresponsible'

Romulo Neri, director general of the National Economic and Development Authority, said Wednesday that the 1.95 percent population growth rate was nearing the government's medium-term target of 1.94 percent.

But Remulla said: "It is irresponsible for anybody to say it is going down as a matter of fact. It is important that we have a census first."

REMULLA: 6-year-old data

He said that with no factual data at hand, it was best to push the passage of HB 3773, which would provide "free and full access to adequate and relevant information on reproductive health and a full range of family methods and devices."

Remulla also said that while the measure drew the support of more than 120 lawmakers as of early this year, Speaker Jose de Venecia and House Majority Leader Prospero Nograles had yet to schedule it for debate.

2 stumbling blocks

"It enjoys broad-based support but we have two stumbling blocks—the Speaker and the majority leader. There have been sponsorship speeches but we still have yet to have our full debates," he said.

Remulla added that this might be due to "very strong pressure" from the Catholic bishops and lay Catholic groups.

Muntinlupa Rep. Rozzano Rufino Biazon, another proponent of the bill, said he was "somewhat pessimistic" about its chances, especially with the House leadership focused on Charter change.

Biazon said the reported slowdown in population growth should not affect the bill's passage because it was not only about population management but was also "a health measure aimed at giving our constituents access to much needed information on reproductive health."

Fertility rate

Quoting results of the NSCB's regular National Demographics and Health Survey, Castro said the fertility rate among women slowed down from an average of six childbirths a year in 1973 to 3.5 childbirths in 2003.

She said the average of 5.1 childbirths a year in 1978 dropped to 4.4 in 1986, to 4.1 percent in 1993, to 3.7 in 1998, and to 3.5 in 2003.

Castro also said the declining fertility rate among women was backed by the fact that the prevalence rate of the use of contraceptives among them had been on an upward trend.

She said that according to the same survey, contraception prevalence rate rose from 17.4 percent of married women aged 15 to 49 in 1973 to 48.9 percent in 2003.

"[The survey] shows that contraception prevalence rate was already almost 49 percent," Castro said, adding that the government's advocacy programs for family planning should be partly credited for this.

Last in priorities

Elmer Labog, chair of the militant labor alliance Kilusang Mayo Uno, said that despite the slowdown in population growth, workers were not being educated on proper and effective family planning methods.

"The general welfare of workers and their families comes last in the priorities of the government and employers. If the government provides sufficient education campaign on population control and, at the same time, provides sufficient employment and sources of living to its people, having a big population will not be a problem," he said.

Labog said it was unfair to always link the poverty problem to population growth.

He said that if the government managed socioeconomic structures well, there would be no poor Filipinos even if the population grew.

To the Neda statement that the government's poverty-reduction goal could be within reach with the slowdown in population growth, Labog said: "Our rich natural resources are more than enough to feed our people, but the Church and the government are both overlooking the fact that there is a big disparity in the distribution of the country's social wealth."

He issued a reminder to Neri that more than half of the national budget was allocated to the payment of onerous foreign debts and military spending rather than on the social services desperately needed by the poor.

Family planning education

But Health Secretary Francisco Duque III said that while the DOH did not have a substantial budget for family planning programs, it had been active in educating couples on natural methods of contraception.

Duque said local government units even had more programs on family planning, especially since the function of providing public health services had been devolved to LGUs since 1992.

Although the national government promotes natural methods, LGUs have their own family planning programs, he said.

Duque also attributed the projected decline in population growth to the improving economy and the growth in the number of educated Filipinos.

"If the economy is improving and if more people are getting educated, the result is that the fertility rate of women is declining. There is a strong relationship between education and fertility rate," he said. *With a report from Jerome Aning and Mary Ann I. Ranola*

GMA lauds Popcom for drop in growth rate

By Christine O. Avendaño

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO wants the population growth rate pegged at its current level of 1.95 percent, Health Secretary Francisco Duque said yesterday.

He said Ms Arroyo stated this position during a Cabinet meeting of the National Anti-Poverty Commission and the National Economic and Development Authority held at Villamor Air Base in Pasay City.

"President Arroyo said the money to be used in bringing down further the population growth rate could be used instead to feed the hungry, generate employment and spur economic activities," Duque told reporters after the meeting.

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said Ms Arroyo congratulated officials of the Population Commission for "the significant drop in the population growth rate."

Duque said that by keeping the population growth rate at this level, Ms Arroyo wanted to "aggressively implement the scientific natural family planning methods."

He named five methods that included the Billings ovulation method, which, he said, was supported by the Catholic Church.

Duque also said the slowdown in the population growth rate was a result of the "economic status" of the people.

"There is a correlation between a person's economic status and the fertility rate. The poorer you are, the higher the fertility rate," he said.

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CEBU PACIFIC

Gov't agency printing Cha-cha primers

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stirred up by the administration's dual moves to amend the 1987 Constitution and adopt the parliamentary system.

The two separate modes involve a signature campaign under a "people's initiative" and the convening of the Senate and the House of Representatives into a constituent assembly.

Legal to spend public funds

PIA Director General Conrado Limcaco dismissed suggestions of wrongdoing.

"The President ran and won on a platform of Charter change," he said. "So it's legal to spend public funds to promote her espoused platform."

The NPO printed the primers at its office on Edsa corner NIA Northside Road in Quezon City from mid-March to early May this year, churning out hundreds of thousands of copies, the insider said.

"The order came from Malacañang. We know the people who brought the materials to us are from Malacañang. They are familiar to us; they have come to our office a number of times," the insider said.

The primer, printed in English and Filipino, harped on the need for Charter change and the advantages of a federal system and parliamentary form of government, and squelched claims this was designed to keep President Macapagal-Arroyo in power.

Allegations that Ms Arroyo stole the 2004 presidential election have sparked demands that she resign although she has denied any wrongdoing.

The 12-page material explained that the President was leaving the matter on Charter change to Congress, even as it pointed to her preference for a constituent assembly to amend the Constitution.

Technical malversation

Lawyer Melanio "Batas" Mauricio said publication of the primers could amount to technical malversation if it was established that PIA funds, allocated by Congress, were used in the project.

"If their fund is allocated for other purpose, that's technical malversation," Mauricio said in an interview.

"This can also be a violation of the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act because you're giving undue advantage to a sector of government pushing for Charter change," he said.

Felipe Evardone, NPO OIC-director, told the Inquirer his agency printed only 100,000 copies -- 50,000 in English and another 50,000 in Filipino. He said the cost was minimal because he used old stocks of paper. "We did not spend a single centavo."

The director is the brother of Eastern Samar Gov. Ben Evardone, spokesperson of the Union of the Local Authorities of the Philippines, which was at the forefront of gathering signatures in support of people's initiative.

"This could be one of the items being distributed in the forums of the Sigaw ng Bayan and the Advocacy Commission. I heard they have been distributing primer on this and that," Rene Azurin said in an interview.

Azurin, a member of the defunct Consultative Commission and one of six who dissented with its recommendation to scrap the 2007 elections preparatory to a shift to parliamentary government, speaks at forums to expose the agenda behind Charter change.

Cash cows

Also on Thursday, the leftist Bagong Alyansang Makabayan said Malacañang's recent takeover of the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. and the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) could be part of Ms Arroyo's Charter change drive.

Renato Reyes, Bayan secretary general, said the move on Pagcor and PCSO was aimed at "tightening government's grip on vital milking cows that can be used to fuel Arroyo's lagging Cha-cha train."

Sigaw ng Bayan, a civic group led by former Concom member Raul Lambino, yesterday called on the Senate to heed the people's "clamor" for Charter change.

The group is spearheading the moves to gather signatures in support of a petition for amendment through a people's initiative. This involves a single question on whether Filipinos approve of the abolition of the Senate in favor of a unicameral legislature and unspecified transitory provisions that will pave the way for the adoption of the parliamentary system.

The effort is facing stiff opposition from a multi-sectoral group which argued that there was no enabling law to cover amendments in a people's initiative and that such an exercise was designed to amend, not revise, the Charter.

Court will settle issues

Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago, who opposed a similar people's initiative in 1997 on grounds there was no law calling for it, yesterday said she favored both the signature gathering campaign and the convening of a constituent assembly to amend the Constitution.

At the sidelines of the state visit to Saudi Arabia, which she joined, Santiago said Ms Arroyo agreed with her that the legality of the two modes would eventually be left to the Supreme Court to settle.

"If the court rules that it would be legal for Congress to vote together instead of separately, then some of us administration senators will participate in the constituent assembly," Santiago said.

Administration lawmakers believe that if the two chambers voted as one the Senate opposition to a constituent assembly would be overcome.

Also yesterday, House Deputy Minority Leader Alan Peter Cayetano urged former President Fidel Ramos to stop "deluding" himself that Charter change would be a "panacea to the nation's ills. It will only perpetuate President Arroyo and her allies in power," he said. *With reports from Juliet Labog-Javellana, Michael Lim Ubac, Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and Norman Bordadora*

Ermita courts generals for Cha-cha

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

A MALACAÑANG-BACKED Charter change group has started courting military and police generals.

With no less than Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita around, the Advocacy Commission for Charter Change made a pitch before members of the Association of Generals and Flag Officers (Agfo) at Camp Aguinaldo yesterday.

Raul Lambino, the group's convenor, even went to the extent of claiming that a change in the system of government would solve much of the military's woes, including the communist insurgency.

"You have been a major political arbiter of this country so we are asking your help in disseminating this information," said another commissioner, Romela Bengzon.

Violation?

Among the active generals who participated in the lecture were Armed Forces Vice Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Antonio Romero and Philippine National Police Deputy Director General Avelino Razon Jr.

The military leadership had insisted on insulating the troops from politics at the height of calls for the resignation of President Macapagal-Arroyo last year over allegations she rigged the 2004 election.

Ermita, a retired general and a convenor of the Advocacy Commission, was unconcerned that bringing the Charter change campaign to the military violated its "apolitical" stance.

"The presence of the advocacy commissioners here does not mean that the military is being politicized. It's just an information campaign. It would not do any harm if they ask the support (of the military) so Charter change will succeed," Ermita told reporters.

Lambino said his group had been asking the AFP and the PNP to openly declare support for the Charter change drive, since Malacañang had already done so.

Nothing illegal

"There's nothing illegal if they're going to openly express support," he said.

He told the generals that the communist insurgency would weaken under a federal-parliamentary system since services would be delivered faster to the poor, thus discouraging them from joining the rebel movement.

"The communists benefit under the present system, which is too slow," Lambino later said in an interview. He said soldiers' perennial complaints about low pay would be solved by changing the system of government.

He said under a parliamentary system, the savings from lesser bureaucratic red tape could be channeled to basic services and better pay for government workers.

"They (soldiers) should support Charter change because they are suffering so much. They're not receiving good benefits. Imagine, their laundry allowance is only P13," said Lambino.

Military as political arbiter

Bengzon said the campaign needed the military's support to succeed.

"The reality is they have become the political arbiter in this country," she said.

"In the recent past, we saw that the military is very significant in providing change or political stability. The reality is political stability in the Philippines to some extent (is based) on which position the military would take. So, therefore, we are asking them at the same time, informing them that Charter change should be one of those that the military (should) support," Bengzon said.

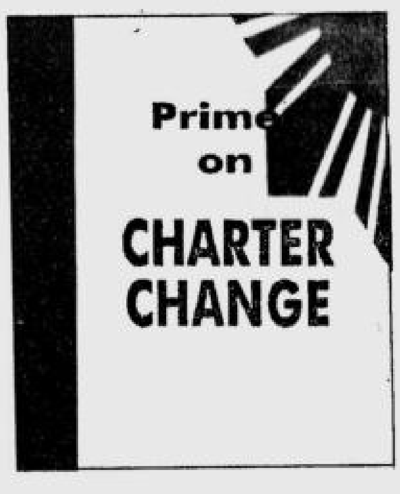
Lambino said their group would try to tour military camps to sell Charter change to the soldiers.

Ermita supported the idea. "I wish it will be done ... because our soldiers and their families should understand what this Charter change is," he said.

No official position

Agfo president Jose Bello, who was a member of the Malacañang-created Consultative Commission that recommended the shift to the federal-parliamentary system, said his group has not taken an official position.

"But the way I look at it, it looks like they (generals) are in favor of the Charter change. Most likely we are going to support it," he said.



3 out of 5 youths . . .

From page A1

funds to bankroll an intensive awareness and education campaign among the youth on the human immunodeficiency virus that could lead to the incurable Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome.

The young people surveyed were part of the "lost generation" that was left out of the intensive education campaign conducted from 1993 to 2003 and funded by the United States Agency for International Development, according to Dr. Eric Tayag, director of the National Epidemiology Center of the DOH.

"They believe that they have an inherent protection against HIV/AIDS. It is a myth and it is disturbing," Tayag said on the sidelines of the CEO forum on HIV/AIDS in the workplace held yesterday at the New World Renaissance Hotel.

Tayag said a good number of these young people were "sexually active," thus putting them at risk of contracting the virus.

He said it was difficult to bring to them the right information on HIV/AIDS because they were "distracted" by such issues as music, fashion and fads.

Tayag said the DOH was considering taking the issue directly to the schools. But he said this would be a challenge because no funds were available to mount an information campaign.

11,168 adults

The latest DOH figures presented during the forum put the number of adults (aged 15-49) living with HIV/AIDS at 11,168.

Of the number, the bulk (or 8,226) came from the "general population."

Another 1,136 were male clients of female sex workers while 1,171 were men who had sex with men. The rest were female sex workers and people using drugs intravenously.

The data also showed that 86 percent of the people living with HIV/AIDS contracted the virus through sexual contact—heterosexual, 62 percent; homosexual, 18 percent; and bisexual, 5 percent.

The rest were infected through needles used in injecting drugs or blood transfusions. A number "inherited" the virus from mothers with HIV-AIDS.

Prevention

Tayag said that while the prevalence of HIV/AIDS in the Philippines was still minimal compared to other countries, the DOH was being proactive and had set a goal of preventing its further spread and reducing its impact on individuals, families and communities.

A call to business

Edgar Chua, country chair of the Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp. and head of the business and health cluster of the Philippine Business for Social Progress, called on business organizations to take part in the information campaign by financing HIV/AIDS education programs in the workplace.

Chua said it made business sense to put up such a program as it would ensure continued productivity in the workplace and, at the same time, constitute a social investment in communities patronizing a company's products.

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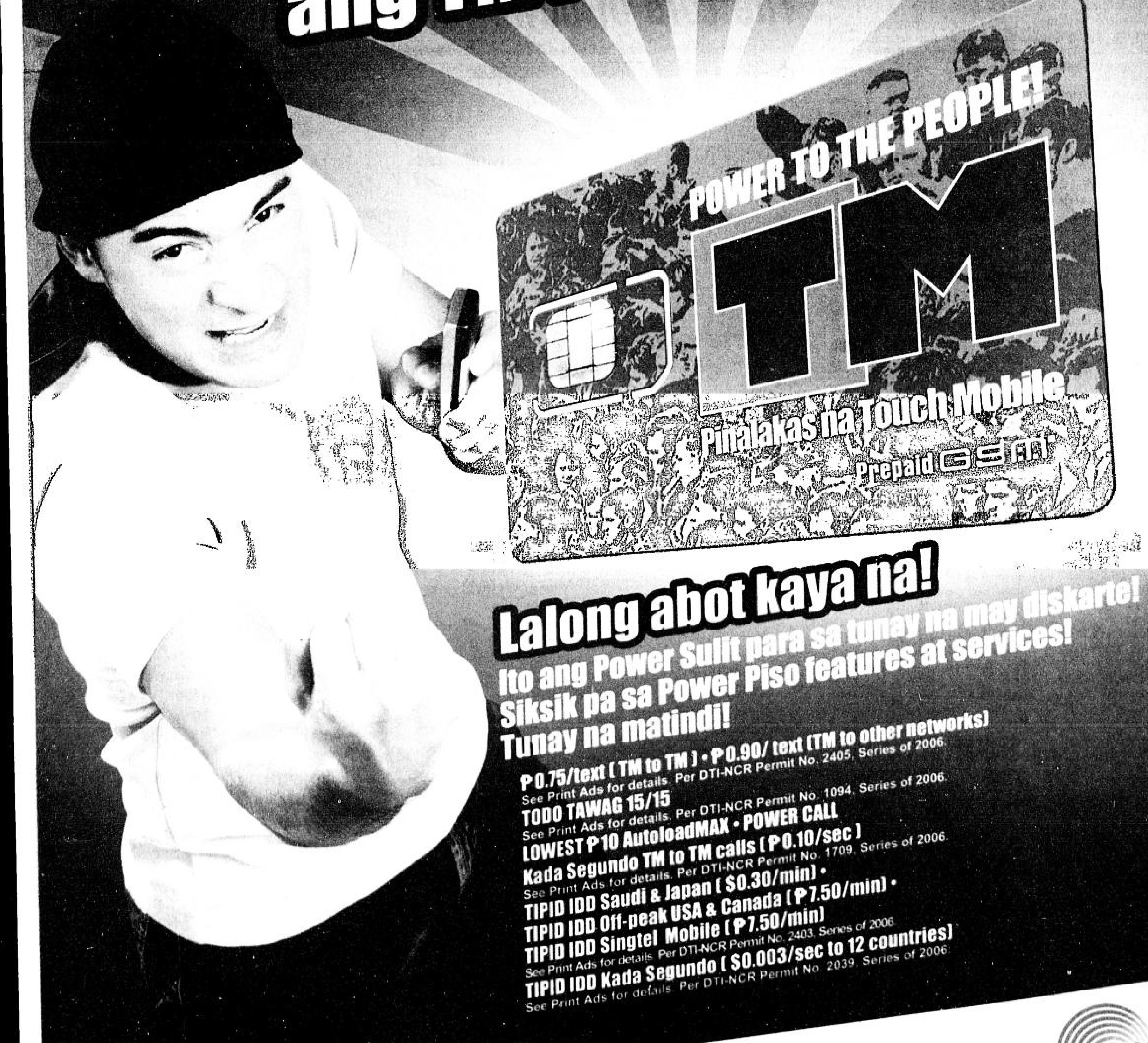

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Caloocan factory closed anew for waste water dumping

Snack firm has no permit to operate, says LLDA

By Blanche S. Rivera

ONLY TWO WEEKS AFTER it was allowed to operate despite violating the government's effluent standards, the factory producing the popular corn snack Boy Bawang was again ordered closed yesterday.

The Laguna Lake Development Authority reimposed the cease-and-desist order (CDO) issued against the KSK Food Products factory in Bignay, Caloocan City, after an inspection team found that it had failed to comply with the conditions of the temporary lifting order (TLO) given to the company.

KSK Food Products is operating without an LLDA clearance and water discharge permit, but has pending applications for the permits, the agency said.

"Remedial measures that they declared in their urgent motion for the issuance of a temporary lifting order are not being strictly implemented," the inspection team said in its report yesterday.

The team, which went to the site on Wednesday, recommended that the LLDA notify the company to strictly implement the remedial measures in its TLO, and repair the facilities required for treating waste water discharges.

LLDA general manager Casimiro Ynares III, however, rejected the recommendations. He said KSK Food Products was not operating its solid-liquid separator, and was not likely to have a waste water treatment facility by July 27.

"Why remind the factory officials again? It took us one year to close it. KSK will not operate again until it completes the waste water treatment facility," Ynares said in an interview yesterday.

No order

KSK spokesperson Narciso Mallari Jr., however, said the company has not yet received the order on the reimposition of the CDO, so it was still operating.

Mallari, chief of the KSK human resources division, insisted that the company was complying with the TLO conditions and was not informed of the LLDA's recent decision.

"We are on track. We have 90 days to comply with the conditions. Everything is being done," he said in a phone interview yesterday.

According to Jonathan Biscocho, head of KSK's manufacturing department, the new order was "unfortunate" because as far as they were concerned, they had abided by the LLDA recommendation and had installed remedial measures.

"One of the pumps was busted and water was not flowing at the time the LLDA people visited the plant," Biscocho said. He explained that the repair work was over and that the pump is now working.

Biscocho added that the food company management would not make any commitment to the LLDA that it could not follow.

Al Santamaria, head of the city's Environment and Sanitation department, on the other hand, said they had not received any complaint against the food company.

"We do not know of any complaint but we will investigate the matter," he added.

High level

Sampling done by an LLDA team on March 6 showed that the level of the bio-oxygen demand in the effluents released by the factory was 1180 mg/l, way higher than the acceptable 50 mg/l, while its chemical oxygen demand level was 3062 mg/l or 300 times more than the standard of 100 mg/l.

The effluents also registered total suspended solids of 544 mg/l, almost 10 times the standard 70. It, however, met the normal pH count with its pH 8.4 and oil and grease of negative 1.

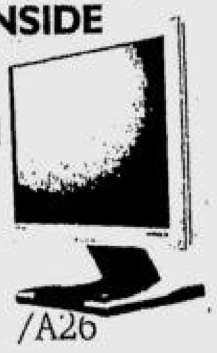
KSK Food Products has been fined around P333,000 for violating the effluent standards of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. It has paid only P83,250 in penalties so far.

Ynares said the LLDA decided it would get serious in penalizing firms with pollution problems within its jurisdiction after experts reported that the Laguna de Bay, the biggest inland body of water in the country, was polluted and "extremely stressed."

The LLDA has issued CDOs against eight firms, including a paper mill, a municipal slaughterhouse and restaurants, this year, but only four got suspension of operations orders. The rest have pending appeals.

With Nancy C. Carvajal

WHAT'S INSIDE



- **Cops seize undervalued computer shipment in Manila** /A26

YAMASHITA

- **Is there Yamashita gold on QC school campus?** /A26
- **2 suspected car thieves arrested in Quezon City** /A26

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Policemen seize undervalued computer shipment in Manila

By Luige A. del Puerto

THE POLICE SEIZED YESTERDAY A 40-foot-van containing computer monitors with an estimated value of P2.6 million.

The police stopped the van as it left the Bureau of Customs area in Manila. They suspected the cargo was misdeclared and the importer paid way below actual duties.

Police seized the truck Tuesday evening as it left Gate 6 in Port Area. When opened by investigators and customs officers inside Camp Crame, the van was found to contain hundreds of computer monitors worth about P3,000 apiece.

Reconditioned or brand new?

Customs officials have yet to determine if the monitors were brand new or reconditioned, but the police said they "looked new."

"The importers said they were used computer parts, but the monitors turned out to be brand new, said Supt. Benjamin de los Santos, head of the anti-smuggling task force of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group.

The importer, Saturn Information Technology, paid only P32,000 for the cargo based on customs documents, the police said.

Red flag

"It's what we call 'red flag'. If only P32,000 is paid for a 40-foot container van, you see a red flag there. It really depends on the cargo, but the average payment for each van is around P100,000," De los Santos said.

Customs examiner Dionisito Valles explained that these kinds of cargo were free of tariff and that the importer paid only for the value added tax.

If it was established that the importer misdeclared the value of goods the, the company would have to pay more, Valles said.

A representative of Saturn Information Technology explained that the computer monitors, imported from Malaysia, were refurbished and reconditioned, and not brand new.

CIDG personnel inspect computer monitors at Camp Crame. JOAN BONDOC

Cops report threat on Makati mayor's life

By Tarra V. Quismundo

BINAY

THE MAKATI CITY GOVERNMENT DISclosed yesterday what it called a "continuing and serious threat" on the life of Mayor Jejomar Binay.

Sr. Supt. Marietto Valerio, Makati police chief, in a report to Binay, said "unknown forces" were planning to hurt or, worse, assassinate the opposition leader.

"The mayor faces a continuing and serious threat from still unknown but powerful blocs that may strike unexpectedly," said Valerio in the report declassified yesterday by City Hall.

But the threats did not faze Binay, president of the United Opposition (UNO), an organization at the forefront of the campaign for President Macapagal Arroyo's ouster.

After making some changes in his security arrangements, his staff said the mayor continued with his daily routine.

"My work as mayor and as president of the [UNO] will not be affected by threats from individuals who have no respect for the role of the opposition in a democracy," Binay said.

The Makati Police Station made the threat assessment on Binay's request. He wanted to know if reported threats against him, his family and political allies were real, Valerio said.

Binay received similar threats in May 2002 through text messages, unsigned letters and calls to his office.

The police also learned of a "politically motivated" assassination plot.

In its latest report, the police said some men had been monitoring the mayor's moves, as well as those of family members, friends and known supporters.

Valerio cited the recent assassination of Binay's political ally, Edilmar Pancipane, as an indication that the threat was real.

Is the Yamashita gold under a QC business school?

By DJ Yap and Kenneth del Rosario

ARE TREASURE HUNTERS SEEKING the fabled Yamashita gold digging under the Philippine School of Business Administration (PSBA) in Quezon City to unearth the treasure?

The city's building officials are looking into reports that treasure-hunting excavations may cause the foundations of the school on Aurora Boulevard to collapse.

So far, the city has found no proof of the claim, and no complaint has been received by the Office of the Building Official (OBO), the concerned agency.

But city officials said they would continue their probe, since the safety of the school was at stake.

A PSBA official, who refused to give his name but identified himself as chief of security and maintenance, vehemently denied that diggings were being done on campus. "In fact, inspections have been done by the city's building officials and security people from the mayor's office, but nothing was found," he told the INQUIRER.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources sent its own inspection team yesterday to inspect the site, but it is not known when the team would release its report. Antonio Avila, chief of the enforcement and inspection division of the OBO, confirmed that previous inspections of the site yielded negative results.

PSBA representatives conferred with building officials on Wednesday, and promised to submit the school's position paper by Monday, Avila said. He expected the document to reiterate the school's denial.

One of the members of the May 5 inspection team, architect Edgardo del Rosario, said he searched inside and outside the building for signs of diggings, but found nothing out of the ordinary. But he admitted that the inspections were "not thorough," since he was escorted by school security people the whole time.

Avila said the investigation into the alleged excavation work began when seven persons claimed in radio interviews that they had been digging at the PSBA for the past several years.

Del Rosario said tales of treasure-hunting at the PSBA had been making the rounds since the late 1990s.

METROBRIEFS

Wrong outlet

THE PASIG CITY government is set to file charges against a company engaged in siphoning sludge from septic tanks in Metro Manila for allegedly dumping human waste into a drainage system. Raquel Naciongayo, head of the City Environment and Natural Resources Office, said workers of the E. Malabanan Belen company allegedly dumped the waste early Tuesday morning into a drainage system on Avis corner Santiago Streets in Barangay Bagong Ilog. Barangay watchman Bienvenido Landicho, who was on patrol duty at that time, said he had witnessed the incident and promptly took down the plate number of the company's dump. The truck driver, Fernando Marciano, however, told police he had no hand in the dumping of the waste. Naciongayo said the city's Business Permit and Licensing Office had suspended all permits given to the company after it was reportedly caught dumping human waste in a drainage system in E. Rodriguez, Quezon City on June 14, 2004. The INQUIRER tried to get in touch with Luzviminda Belen, the company's operating manager, but a staffer said she was not around. A company employee, Sandra Retirado, however, denied the allegations. "It was not human waste that was dumped in the drainage. It was just liquid," she said. *Jocelyn R. Uy*

YAAAK! ANONG KLASENG PAMAMALAKAD 'YAN ?!

ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

Short ride

TWO suspected car thieves believed to be linked to the same group that stole the car of a congressman's wife in Quezon City recently were arrested before midnight Wednesday. A day after three armed men stole the Nissan Patrol of Pricilla Espino, wife of Pangasinan Rep. Amado Espino Jr.,, police caught two suspected carjackers aboard the same getaway car used in the incident. The suspects were identified as Ernesto Sagabaen, 42, a car salesman also known by the alias "Mark Reyes," and Rolando Gatche, 22. Investigators said the suspects, with three other men, tried to hijack a Toyota Rav 4 owned by Rodolfo Abrinico at 11 p.m. along Edsa, Balintawak. The suspects fled on board a black Mitsubishi Lancer and led pursuing police officers in a chase that ended in Caloocan City. *DJ Yap*

Operation not legit

POLICE arrested four of their own anti-narcotics agents during a tension-filled buy-bust operation in Manila yesterday. The four men turned out to be officers of the Manila Police District's anti-illegal drugs unit. The arrested men claimed they were conducting a legitimate operation when they were apprehended, but could not produce papers to back their claim and were not accompanied by any official, according to Chief Inspector Rodel Pastor, head of the arresting unit. Pastor's team seized more than a kilo of suspected shabu estimated at P3.4 million found in a car allegedly owned by the four who were identified as PO1 Erwin Castro, PO2 Jonathan Ruiz, PO3 Mike Fabian Ongpauco and PO2 Dranreb Cipriano. *Luige A. del Puerto*

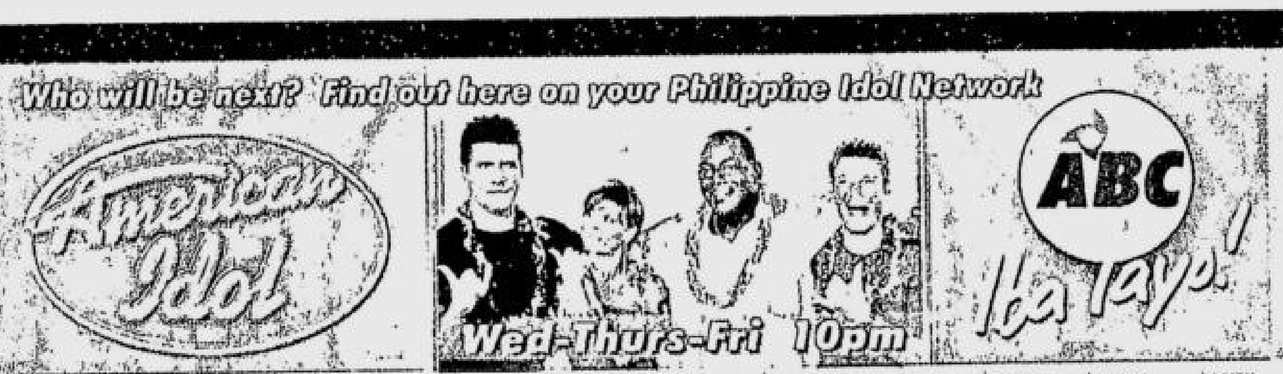
Detox symposium

FOR its 8th founding anniversary, the Philippines Federation of Natural Health is offering to the public a free health symposium on body detoxification on Saturday, May 13 at the Emerald function room, Tiara Oriental Hotel on Malugay Street corner Talisay, San Antonio Village, Makati City, from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. For reservations, please call Ms Emz at tel. 3717016

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

TV GUIDE

Friday, May 12, 2006



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ABC 5				National Geographic	PBA				Sentro	PBA					Big News	Something About [illegible]		Real Stories	
ABS-CBN 2	Kapamilya Cinema			Pasion de Amor	Little Amy	Mr Bean	Naruto	Outstanding Twins	TV Patrol World		Pinoy Big Brother	Gulong Ng Palad	Sa Piling Mo	Panday	Wonderful Life	Gudtaym			Insider
AXN		When Animals Attack		Sports Disaster IV		Fear Factor (Season V)		The 4400 (Season 2)		PSI Factor (Season III)			E Buzz	Terminator 3: Rise Of The Machines		When Disasters Strike!			The Man In The Iron Mask
Cartoon Network	Police Academy	Richie Rich	Tom & Jerry Show	Baby Looney Tunes	Hi Hi Puffy AmiYumi	Codename Kids Next Door	The Grim Adventures Of Billy & Mandy	The Simpsons		Power Rangers Wild Force	PokeMon	Yu-Gi-Oh Double Duel		The Simpsons		Mucha Lucha!	Duck Dodgers	Justice League	Samurai Jack
Cinemax				[illegible] (3:50 PM)			The Firm (5:20 PM)					Pterodactyl			2 Fast 2 Furious			Against The Ropes (11:15PM)	
CNN		Business International		World News	World Sport	Larry King Live		Business International	World Sport	World News Asia		World News	World Sport	World News Asia	World News Asia	Your World Today			
Crime/Suspense		Surface		Law & Order: Special Victims Unit		Profiler		Forensic Files	Takedown	Law & Order		Law & Order: Special Victims Unit		Dominick Dunne's Power, Privilege & Justice		Law & Order: Criminal Content		Crossing Jordan	
Discovery Channel	Connect	Extreme Engineering		The Chief Who Speaks To God		Beyond Tomorrow		Stay Alive		Rides		American Chopper		Beyond Tomorrow		Psychic Witness		Crime Night	
Disney Channel	Mr. Bean, The Animated Series	Totally Spies	Art Attack/Untalkative Bunny	Mickey Mouseworks	Lilo & Stitch	Martin Mystery	Totally Spies	Kim Possible	Mr. Bean, The Animated Series	That's So Raven That's So Trendy Week				Brandy & Mr Whiskers	America's Funniest Home Video	Kim Possible	Totally Spies		
ESPN		Motorsport Asia	Major League Baseball Thurs: Red Sox @ Yankees						LPGA Golf Franklin American Mortgage C'ship				In The Driver's Seat	Sportscenter Asia	Major League Baseball Thurs: Red Sox @ Yankees				
ETC		American Dreams 3		Change of Heart	Elimidate	Blind Date	Fifth Wheel	Seinfeld	Ambush Makeover	The Tyra Banks Show		Joan Of Arcadia		American Dreams 3		Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno	
ETC 2nd Avenue		Starting Over		The Maury Povich Show		The Jerry Springer Show		Dr. Phil		NBC Nightly News	The Inside Edition	The Ellen Show		Wheel Of Fortune	Jeopardy	Trading Spouses		NBC Nightly News	The Inside Edition
EWTN	The Good Code: The Natural Law	Chaplet Of Mercy/ Angelus	The Donut Man	Angel Force	Rosary With Mother Angelica	EWTN Gallery	Backstage	The Gospel Of Life In Health	Defending Life	Life on The Rock Encore		Daily Mass Live		Holy Land Rosary/ Angelus	Parable	EWTN Bookmark	St. Thomas Aquinas In Today's World	Fr. John Corapi	
Fox News		Hannity & Colmes		On The Record With Greta Van Susteren		The O'Reilly Factor		Your World With Neil Cavuto		Fox & Friends						Fox News Live			
GMA 7	Agawin Mo Man Ang Lahat	Now and Forever (3:15 PM)	Snow White Sweet Love		Saiyuki	Dragonball Z	Gokusen	24 Oras		Extra Challenge	Majika	Love Of The Condor Heroes		Jewel In The Palace		Bubble Gang			Saksi
Hallmark Channel		Mcleod's Daughters IV		Ronnie And Julie (4:05 PM)				Bewitched	The Nanny	Judging Amy		Sue Thomas: F.B. Eye II		Hustle		Jane Doe: Vanishing Act			Hustle (11:45PM)
HBO	Mo' Money			Necessary Roughness				Nick Of Time			Raising Cain			Twelve Monkeys				The Big Preview (11:10PM)	Honey (11:40PM)
Hero TV	Yu-Gi-Oh Duel Monsters	Yakitate! Japan	Mr. Ajikko	D.I.C.E.	Samurai Deeper Kyo	Combattler V	Gundam Seed	Iron Man 28	Beyblade G-Revolution	Yu-Gi-Oh GX	Naruto	Mirmo de Pon	Inuyasha	Yu-Gi-Oh Duel Monsters	Yakitate! Japan	Mr. Ajikko	D.I.C.E.	Samurai Deeper Kyo	Gundam Seed
IBC 13		EZ Shop				Home Shopping Network	IBC Express Balita	Japan Video Topics		Japan Video Topics		ME TV		PTA Best Of The Philippines		Global Family Series	IBC News Tonite	Home Shopping Network	
JackTV	The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	The Late Show David Letterman		Jack In The Box				Megas XLR	Beat The Geeks	Mad TV		That 70s Show	Always Sunny In Philadelphia	The Late Show David Letterman		The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	Premium Blend	Reno 911	Insomniac W Dave Attell
Lifestyle Network	Country Style	30 Minute Meals	Wolfgang Puck	Sweet Dreams	Interiors By Design	Decorating Style	Decorating Cents	Food Network Special		Ming's Quest	Intimate Portrait		Behind The Velvet Ropes	Martha		Simply Wine With Andrea Immer	The Great Adventure	Iron Chef America	
MTV Philippines					Pop Inc		MTV Hits (with SMS)			Get Spoiled				MTV Diyos					
MYX		Rock MYX	My MYX	Mellow MYX	Urban MYX	Take 5	MYXLOG	MYX Firsts	Star MYX	OPM MYX	Pop MYX	MYX Daily Top Ten		Club MYX	MYX Versions	Urban MYX	My MYX	MYX Backtrax	MYXLOG
National Geographic	Wildlife Diary	Nat'l Geographic Specials: Mkomazi Rhino		Storm Stories S2: Samoa Slides	Rough Trades	Amazing Moments: Close Encounters		Top 5 - Wild Family: Miracle of Pantanal		WOW! Journey Into Amazonia: The Land Reborn		About Asia: Sulawesi (Microbikers)		Nat'l Geographic Specials: Violent Planet		Storm Stories S2: Thailand Tsunami	Rough Tracks	In The Womb	
NBN		Teledyaryo Alas-Tres		Teledyaryo Sports Alsp	Diyos Ko, Mahal Mo Ba Siya?	Teledyaryo W/ Rey Langit & Angelique Lazo		GSIS Member's Hour		Tinig ng Bayan (Live)		Teledyaryo Final Edition				Bantay OCW With Susan K			
Nickelodeon	Chalkzone	Hey Arnold!	SpongeBob SquarePants	My Life As A Teenage Robot	All Grown Up	The Adventures Of Jimmy Neutron	SpongeBob SquarePants	Drake & Josh	Naturally Sadie	Romeo	All That	All Grown Up	As Told By Ginger	Four Eyes	SpongeBob SquarePants	The Adventures Of Jimmy Neutron	The Fairly Odd Parents	My Dad The Rock Star	
PBO			Teacher, Teacher I Love You				Alkalde Ng Bayan				Julian Makabayan				[illegible]				Gusto Ko Nang Lumigaya
Qtv	Ikaw Lang Ang Mamahalin		Zentrix	Kaleido Star	MMS (My Music Station)		Moms		Magic Ring	Irene	Noel	Project 11	Ganda Ng Lola Ko		News On Q	Love Life		Irene	Over The Green Fields
RPN 9						Global Window	RPN Aksyon News	Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	WWE Smackdown		World Poker Tour		The Ultimate Fighter		Newswatch Now	TV Greats On Friday		
SBN 21				New Life TV Shopping				Winner TV Shopping		Quantum Global		Oras Ng Himala		Oras ng Katotohanan		Shepards Voice		SBN Music Video	
Solar Sports				NBA Action	WTA NASDAQ-100 SF 2 Sharapova vs Golovin				GWS 10-2006	Sagupaan	NBA Jam	2006 NBA Playoffs Conf. Semis					Solar Sports Desk	Table Tennis World Team C'ships	
Star Movies				A Killer Upstairs (3:50 PM)			Tremors II			The Village (7:10 PM)				Taxi			[illegible] (10:40PM)		
Star World	Arrested Development	The Bold & The Beautiful		General Hospital		Ed		The Simpsons	Malcolm In The Middle	Star News Asia	Seinfeld	TNA Wrestling		The Collector/ Hard Watch (Series 4)		NYPD Blue (Series 12)		Seinfeld	Walker Texas Ranger
Studio 23	Bewitched	Naruto				Dance Idol	Teen Titans	The Batman	Justice League Unlimited	Wazzup Wazzup	Barkada Nights			[illegible] (9:10 PM)		News Central	Oprah		Reality World

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Putin: Russia has to be strong vs 'fortress' US

MOSCOW—RUSSIA FACES A growing arms race against a "fortress" United States which cares more about its own interests than democracy or human rights, President Vladimir Putin said Wednesday in his annual state of the nation speech.

In a wide-ranging, nationally televised address to both houses of parliament, Putin spent most time on domestic issues, particularly the rapid decline of the country's population, which the Russian leader said is losing 700,000 people a year.

But his most biting comments targeted the United States, which has become increasingly critical of Russia's human rights records, with Vice President Dick Cheney claiming last week that "opponents of democracy" were seeking to roll back post-Soviet gains.

Putin warned that it was "premature to speak of the end of the arms race. It is in reality rising to a new technological level."

He said that Russia was forced to react when the United States was spending 25 times more on defense.

"In the defense sphere, this is called 'their house is their fortress.' Well done! But it means that we must build our house strongly, reliably, because we see what's going on in the world."

Putin—who in July hosts US President George W. Bush and other leaders of the Group of Eight at a Saint Petersburg summit—swiped at US complaints that his seven-year rule has undercut Russian democracy.

"Where does the whole pathos about the need to struggle for democracy and human rights disappear to, when the talk is about ensuring one's own interests?" he demanded. "Then it seems everything is possible. There are no limits at all."

He then borrowed a Russian saying to illustrate the United States' alleged double standards. "As the saying goes, comrade wolf knows who to eat and he eats without listening to others."

Putin also laid out a vision of a Russia switching from an ageing and uncompetitive Soviet-era infrastructure to an economy centred on high-tech areas such as nanotechnology, nuclear power and the space industry.

"In conditions of fierce international competition, the country's economic development must be based, essentially, on its scientific and technological advantages," he said.

"Unfortunately, one has to face that the majority of the technical equipment used in the national economy is not years behind the top level, but decades." *AFP*

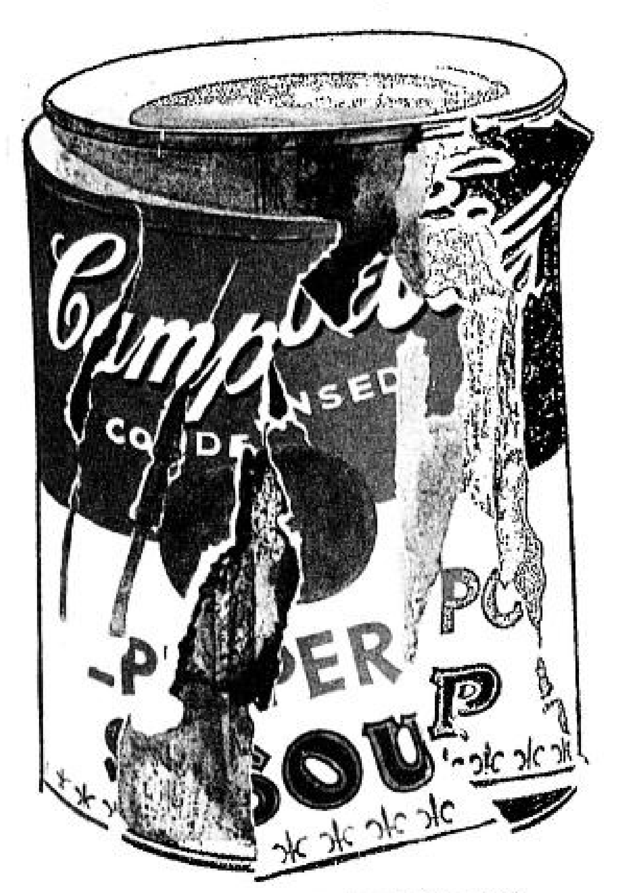
Italy chooses president

ROME—ITALY PICKED A FORMER communist, Giorgio Napolitano, to be its new president on Wednesday, opening the way for Romano Prodi to become prime minister more than a month after winning a close-run general election.

Napolitano, an 80-year-old senator for life, secured 543 votes from the "grand electors"—parliamentarians and regional representatives—38 more than the absolute majority needed.

The result was a crucial victory for Prodi who cannot take his center-left coalition into power until the new president gives him a mandate to govern.

It was the latest blow to outgoing Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, the media tycoon who took three weeks to accept he lost the April 9-10 national election by a whisker. *Reuters*



SOLD TO THE SOUP LOVER FOR $11.7M
A 1962 painting entitled: "Small Torn Campbell's Soup Can (Pepper Pot)," by pop artist Andy Warhol was sold at auction by Christies for $11.7 million. AP

Why won't US, Iran work out differences in face-to-face talks?

By William J. Kole

VIENNA, AUSTRIA—AS THE United States toughens its stance on Iran's nuclear program, and bitterness toward Americans hardens on the streets of Tehran, many people can't help but wonder: Why don't the two countries hold face-to-face talks to ease the crisis?

Some say Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's letter this week to US President George W. Bush—the first of its kind in nearly three decades—could break the impasse. But leaders, experts and commentators believe the prospects of the two meeting to defuse virtually irreconcilable differences are bleak at best.

Bush, they point out, doesn't want to engage in dialogue with the head of a state he labeled part of an "Axis of Evil" along with Iraq and North Korea. And Ahmadinejad's letter, while an overture, was laced with old grievances against an America that Tehran brands the "Great Satan" and spelled out a long list of Iranian demands.

IRAN President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad AP

"Both the United States and Iran regard each other as a hostile country," Shen Dingli, director of the Institute of American Studies at Fusan University in Shanghai, China, said Wednesday.

"They don't believe the nuclear issue can be resolved through negotiation. Iran believes it must acquire nuclear weapons to ensure state security," he said. "The United States does not want to have direct talks with Iran just like it does not want to talk with North Korea."

Shahin Gobadi, spokesperson for the Paris-based National Council of Resistance of Iran, an exile group, said a Bush-Ahmadinejad summit is implausible because the Tehran regime "has not been willing to accept the norms and rules of conduct of the 21st century."

"This regime is built on the concept of medieval religious tyranny. It's not compatible with dialogue," he told The Associated Press. "Either you try to export your revolution to other countries or you deal like a normal government."

If Ahmadinejad's 18-page letter sums up Iran's position in a standoff that has moved to the UN Security Council, then "there is no prospect of negotiation," said Steve Hoadley, an associate professor of political studies at New Zealand's Auckland University. *AP*

WORLDBRIEFS

A.M. Rosenthal, NY Times editor; 84

ROSENTHAL AP

NEW YORK—New York Times journalist A.M. Rosenthal, who left an indelible mark on the US newspaper during 17 years as its top editor, died on Wednesday at the age of 84, the paper said. Rosenthal suffered a stroke two weeks ago and never recovered, his son Andrew told the Times. Born on May 2, 1922 in Sault Ste Marie in Canada of a Jewish family with roots in Belarus, Rosenthal started with the paper in 1944. Rosenthal, known as Abe, covered the United Nations for the Times and later served as a foreign correspondent in India and Japan. He won the Pulitzer Prize in 1960 for his reporting on the communist regime in Poland, which expelled him for his efforts. He rose through the ranks to take over as managing editor beginning in 1969, later taking the title of executive editor. In 1971, Rosenthal played an instrumental role in the decision to publish the "Pentagon Papers," a secret government history of the Vietnam War. President Richard Nixon's administration failed to block the publication of the papers that revealed a pattern of official deception. The dispute led to a landmark Supreme Court ruling that rejected the government's demand to require "prior restraint" on what may be printed. Rosenthal oversaw coverage of the war in Vietnam, the Watergate scandal, the Cold War and crises in the Middle East. Along with publisher Arthur Sulzberger, he is credited with helping restore the paper's health after an economic slide and overseeing a new format that has continued to this day. *AFP*

Briton wants Guantanamo closed

LONDON—In the most explicit British condemnation of the Guantanamo Bay detention center, Lord Goldsmith, the attorney general, said Wednesday that the camp's existence was "unacceptable" and ran counter to the United States' tradition as a "beacon of freedom, liberty and of justice." He called for it to be closed. The remarks by Lord Goldsmith, the government's most senior adviser, went far beyond the set response offered by Prime Minister Tony Blair who, when asked for his views on Guantanamo, called it an "anomaly" that must at some stage close. The prime minister, America's closest ally in the military campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan, offered no direct comment on his aide's views. But his official spokesperson, who is not publicly identified under civil service rules, said the camp's existence presented a problem because American officials saw many of the detainees as dangerous people who could not be released. *NYT*

Hispanics, Asians fastest growing in US

WASHINGTON—HISPANICS AND Asians are the fastest growing ethnic groups in the United States, where one in three people now belong to a minority group, the US Census Bureau said Wednesday.

In 2005, the minority population totaled 98 million, or 33 percent of the 296.4 million US population, the agency said.

"These mid-decade numbers provide further evidence of the increasing diversity of our nation's population," Census Bureau director Louis Kincannon said.

Hispanics—a cultural grouping whose members may belong to any race or combination of races—were the largest and fastest growing US-minority, numbering 42.7 million and with a 3.3 percent population rate increase in the year ending July 1, 2005.

Of the increase of 1.3 million, 500,000 were new immigrants, the bureau said.

Blacks formed the second largest minority group at 39.7 million and had a population rate increase of 1.3 percent.

The Asian population of 14.4 million grew by three percent. More than half of this group's increase—239,000 of a total 421,000—was due to immigration.

The other minority groups surveyed by the Census Bureau were American Indians and Alaska natives, (4.5 million), and native Hawaiians and other Pacific islanders (990,000). They grew by one percent and 1.5 percent, respectively.

Non-Hispanic whites represent almost 67 percent of the total population, but this group has an older median age and a slow growth rate, adding just 500,000 new members in the time period studied, the Census Bureau said. *AFP*

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The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

1,091 killed in Baghdad in April

AN IRAQI woman weeps outside a hospital after her daughter was killed by a bomb attack in Kerbala, 110 km south of Baghdad May 7. REUTERS

BAGHDAD—IRAQI PRESIDENT JALAL TALABANI on Wednesday said at least 1,091 people had been killed last month in sectarian violence in Baghdad alone, as a much anticipated parliamentary session produced little result.

Urging quick efforts to quell the raging Shiite-Sunni communal bloodshed, Talabani said "we received a report from the morgue about the deaths in Baghdad that 1,091 people were killed between April 1 and 30."

"We are shocked and angry at the daily reports of unidentified bodies being discovered and of people killed on the basis of their identity," Talabani was quoted as saying in a statement issued by his office.

The parliamentary session ended following a reading out of new internal regulations with no mention of an anticipated announcement of the country's new cabinet. Parliament will reconvene on Sunday.

Talabani said the overall number of people killed in the violence would be "alarming if we include the number of bodies still missing across Iraq."

"I urge all political parties and security forces to quickly move to quell this bleeding from crimes aimed to create doubts between sons of Iraq and disrupt national unity," he added.

Talabani also said that the current "institutional weakness," a lack of government, was "benefiting the terrorists."

Nearly five months since the December elections for the country's first full-term post-Saddam parliament, Iraq is still without a government due to wrangling between leaders over ministerial berths.

Raging sectarian violence has left thousands dead across Iraq, mostly Sunni Arabs, in Shiite reprisals after the bombing of a revered Shiite shrine in the northern town of Samarra on Feb. 22.

The sectarian bloodshed has torn Iraq at a time when the Sunni-backed insurgency has already left over 35,000 civilians dead, according to some estimates, since the end of the US-led invasion in April 2003.

In the latest attacks, at least 16 people were killed across Iraq Wednesday, including 12 in an ambush near the restive city of Baquba, just north of Baghdad. *AFP*

BLUE ROSES FOR A RED LADY

The world's first "blue roses" developed by Japanese brewer Suntory are seen during a press preview for the Rose Show as part of the World Rose Convention in Osaka May 11. AFP

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2,000 US corruption cases

WASHINGTON—A POST 9/11 EFFORT BY THE FBI to concentrate on public corruption now includes more than 2,000 investigations under way, highlighted by the Jack Abramoff lobbying inquiry, the racketeering and fraud conviction of former Gov. George Ryan Sr. of Illinois and the multipronged corruption probes following the guilty plea by Randy Cunningham, a former Republican House member from San Diego, bureau officials said.

As one of the Bush administration's least known anticrime efforts, the three-year FBI initiative has yielded an unexpectedly rich array of cases. The results suggest that wrongdoing by public officials at all levels of government is deeply rooted and widespread. Several of the highest profile cases in which the FBI played an active role involve Republicans.

Bureau officials believe the investment in corruption cases is easily worth the cost. In 2004 and 2005, more than 1,060 government employees have been convicted of corrupt activities as well as 177 federal officials, 158 state officials, 360 local officials and 365 police officers, according to FBI statistics. That is a 27 percent increase in the number of convictions in the last two years.

In an interview, FBI Director Robert S. Mueller III said: "You come to realize first of all that public corruption tears the fabric of a democratic society. You lose faith in public officials. It leads to cynicism. It leads to distrust in government." *NYT*

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FIVE-GOLD winner Jasmine Al-Khaidi of NCR returns to the dressing room after topping her heat in the 100m butterfly. JESS YUSON

Powerhouse NCR poised for two-division sweep

By Marc Anthony Reyes

NAGA CITY (VIA BAYANTEL)—HEAVY RAINS AND gusts announcing the impending arrival of tropical storm Caloy wrecked yesterday's schedule but not after the National Capital Region had forged ahead in both elementary and secondary divisions of the Palarong Pambansa at the Metro Naga Sports Complex.

With their continued success in athletics and swimming and new gains in taekwondo and lawn tennis, the Big City athletes took commanding leads based on the points system of the organizing Department of Education and on the unofficial medal count prepared by tallying partner Worldtech Resources Institute.

As of 4 p.m. yesterday, NCR was way ahead in the elementary competitions with 314 points. Defending champion Calabarzon was a far second with 209.5 points and Western Visayas an even more distant third with 126.

Rounding out the top 10 were Central Visayas with 91 points, Northern Mindanao 84, Central Luzon 82.5, Cotabato Region 59, Davao Peninsula and host Bicol Region tied with 55, Mimaropa with 54.5 and Ilocos Region with 43.5 points.

It was the same NCR-Calabarzon-West Visayas leadership hierarchy in the secondary division, although the gap was not as big this time.

Defending champion NCR showed the way with 310.5 points followed by Calabarzon with 269.5 points and Western Visayas with 203.

The rest of the top 10 in high school were Central Visayas (130), host Bicol (84), Northern Mindanao (70), Davao Peninsula (46), Mimaropa (42), Cotabato Region (36) and Central Luzon (34).

In the medal race, NCR kept the lead with 28 golds on top of 20 silvers and 17 bronzes. Calabarzon stood second with a gold-silver-bronze tally of 19-15-14 followed by Western Visayas (12-13-13), Northern Mindanao (6-5-4) and host Bicol Region (5-2-11).

The stormy weather forced the scrapping of the consolation rounds in basketball, volleyball and sepak takraw, but the championship games will be transferred to indoor facilities around the city like the Ateneo de Naga Gym.

"We have contingency plans in case the conditions worsen, but definitely there won't be any cancellation of events because of the weather," Palaro national coordinator Len Toledo told the INQUIRER.

Lawn tennis, football and track and field will push through as scheduled, he added.

JESS YUSON

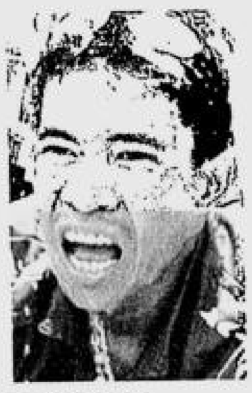
JASON Damaran of Region 7 clears the bar at 1.79 meter to nail the gold.

NCR picked up four golds in elementary taekwondo through Regine Emee Lumbo (girls 4-foot-6 to 4-9), Kim Alexis Garcia (girls 4-9 to 5-0), James Edward Cruz (boys 4-3 to 4-6) and Josh Emmanuel Ong (boys 4-6 to 4-9).

Lumbo beat Thea Danica Albaracin of Davao region for the gold and Garcia outscored Michelle Dagpin of Central Luzon. Cruz won over Calabarzon's John Robert Paras while Ong prevailed over Matthew Cordero.

Veteran Lea Casilihan clocked 16.1 seconds to claim the secondary girls' 100-meter hurdles gold for NCR while Paul Noel Polero and his brother Ryan won the elementary boys' doubles in lawn tennis over Central Visayas' Bernadine Siso and John Arnel Go.

Bicol seized a third gold in athletics when 11-year-old Angeline Panciles ruled the elementary girls' 400 meters, clocking one minute and 3.2 seconds. Other Bicolano winners were Aiza Rosero in secondary shot put and Emmmanuel delos Reyes in secondary long jump.



DAVADILLA

QUIRIMIT

FELICIANO

BARNACHEA

Padyak Pinoy under way; Davadilla picked

By Musong R. Castillo

THE JOURNEY IS JUST OVER 1,200 KILOMEters spread over eight days, quite a short route for someone seeking to land in a place no man before him has ever been to.

But Warren Davadilla is not razor-sharp when he starts his quest to win the Tour Pilipinas for an unprecedented third time beginning today.

The defending champion Davadilla will lead 79 other warriors on wheels in a strength-sapping trek, dubbed Tanduay Padyak Pinoy 2006, that would take them from the flat roads of Quezon City to the highest peaks of Luzon.

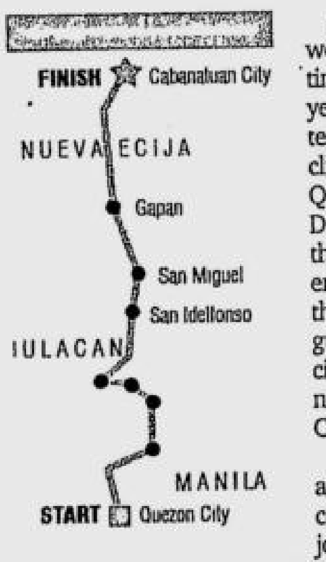
Quezon City Mayor Sonny Belmonte has been invited to flag off the riders at 9 a.m. from the Quezon City Memorial Circle to Cabanatuan City, a 125-km trip that is as important as any in the summer spectacle's short but tough itinerary.

Davadilla will be coming into the Tour with just a month's preparation, with the challenge to come from a talented field that includes Arnel Quirimit, another former champ.

The bikathon was postponed twice and chopped down ultimately to just eight stages. It does not offer prize money comparable to the big purses in recent past.

But Davadilla's bid for an unprecedented third victory will be the main focus of this event that has produced sports legends like Jose Sumalde and Cornelio Padilla Jr.

"Another victory will make him the greatest champion of all time," Rene Dolosa, the Bicolano superstar of the 1990s, said in Filipino.



Davadilla, who won for the first time in 1998, is 30 years old and a tested mountain climber like Quirimit, but Dolosa believes there are other riders capable of thwarting the big guns like Ernie Feliciano, Santy Barnachea and Joel Calderon.

From Cabanatuan, the tour proceeds on a 208-km journey to San Fernando City in La Union before taking on the Tour's first real test, the 170-km San Fernando-to-Baguio third stage.

There will be three "killer" climbs, the second taking place in Stage 6 when the riders tackle the "Tatlong Eme" inside the Quezon National Park in the trek from Lucena to Sta. Rosa City.

The Tagaytay-to-Tagaytay seventh stage will more or less determine the outcome, especially in a portion of Talisay town in Batangas where the treacherous "Sungay Road" is located.

Sungay Road is a 9-km stretch that has a 40-degree incline, where more than a handful of riders were forced to dismount last year.

A total of P2.6 million is up for grabs.

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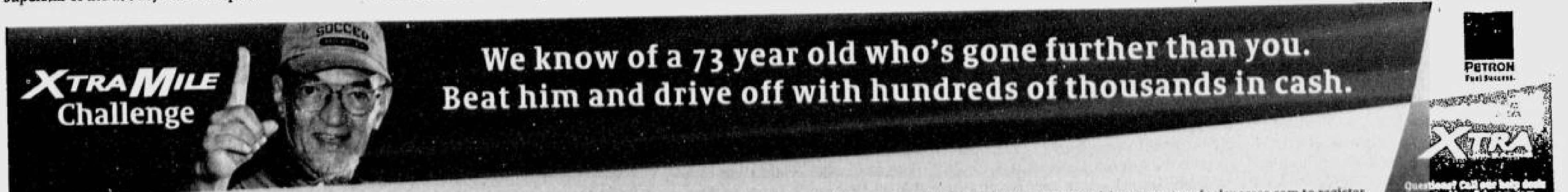
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Bacchus-Harbour scores

BACCHUS/HARBOUR CENTRE-MANILA stepped up in the payoff period to turn back Valencia Golden Harvest, 86-72, the other night and solidify its northern division lead in the 2006 Guerrero Brandy-NBC national basketball championship at the C.P. Tinga gym.

Former Ateneo Blue Eagle Magnum Membrere broke the backs of Mayor Jose Galario Jr.'s Valencia cagers, scoring most of his 15 points when it mattered as Bacchus/Harbour overcame 19-21 and 32-36 deficits in the first two quarters.

After a nip-and-tuck third canto which ended at 54-all, coach Lawrence Chongson's Manila squad waxed hot at the start of the fourth and opened a 69-58 advantage with 3:08 remaining.

Valencia never seemed to get its groove back, taking the final blow in the last two minutes after assistant coach Nolie Tagsip was thrown out for incurring two technical fouls.

The scores:

BACCHUS/HARBOUR 86—Membrere 15, Hardin 15, Retaga 13, Sta. Cruz 10, Jay Cuevas 9, Coyukang 7, Pribdhas 5, Jun Cuevas, Padilla 4, Pile 2, Masbang 2.

VALENCIA 72—Cruz 12, Braga 12, Cummings 11, Celiz 10, Navales 7, Clavel 6, Berami 6, Cabili 4, Adams 2, Romaguera 2.

Quarters: 19-21, 32-36, 54-54, 86-72.

GUERRERO BRANDY NBC NAT'L TOURNEY

STANDINGS	W	L
North Division		
Bacchus/Harbour	5	2
Forward Taguig	4	2
Batang Tagaytay	4	3
Spring-P'ñaque	2	3
Pangasinan	2	4
Laguna-S. Rosa	0	6
South Division		
Ozamiz Cotta	5	0
Iligan Crusaders	6	3
North Cotabato	4	3
Pagadian	4	3
Valencia	2	5
Iloilo Warriors	1	4

MLP, Davao booters hot picks

GAMES TODAY
(*SJRI Field*)
8 a.m.—Davao vs Iloilo
2:30 p.m.—MPL vs Negros Oriental

SAN CARLOS CITY—Muntinlupa-Parañaque-Las Piñas coach Ed Nierras has been gambling on a different starting 11 in three games. And the ploy has been working wonders.

"We have a deep bench and our players are very young," said Nierras, who hopes that altering his roster anew in today's semifinal against Negros Oriental will give them the edge in the 1st PFF-National Under-17 Girls' Football Championships here. "The girls have been playing better with every game."

With 12-year-old wonder girl Cristina de los Reyes stepping up for the injured April Cuenca, the MPL selection has created a stir not only for its looks but for its cohesive play.

De los Reyes has scored four goals so far as MPL captured the first semifinal berth in Group C following victories against Cagayan de Oro and Rizal.

Davao goes into the other semifinal match as the odds-on favorite against Iloilo in this tourney sponsored by Petron, Red Ribbon and 2Go and Solar Sports' Sports Plus.

"We expect to win," Davao coach Julio Orcasitas said. "Our advantage is we have a healthy team." *Cedelf P. Tupas, PDI Visayas Bureau*

Toyota Otis takes No. 9 for solo lead

TOYOTA OTIS LEANED ON A STRONG FINish to hold off the Granny Goose Tortillos, 73-64, taking the solo lead for the first time with its third straight win in the 2006 PBL Unity Cup yesterday at the Olivarez Sports Center in Parañaque.

JV Casio and Aaron Aban joined hands in a 6-0 run that finally put away the Snackmasters, 70-62, only 68 ticks left.

With the win, the Sparks improved to 9-3 and now need only to win one of their last two games to claim one of two outright semis berths.

The Snackmasters slipped to 6-6, their bid for an automatic semis bid now in peril.

In the other match, TeleTech bucked another collapse and tripped Hapee-PCU, 76-72, to keep its flickering quarterfinals hopes alive.

The Titans squandered a huge 12-point lead late in the third period but managed to hang tough to notch their third win in 12 games.

"We complimented our solid defense with our good shooting," said coach Jerry Codiñera.

But it's going to be a tall order for the Titans to advance to the next round.

They need to beat Rain or Shine on Saturday and then Harbour Centre next week while also hoping the Portmasters lose all their three matches.

The same thing goes for the Teethmasters, who suffered their sixth straight loss for a 3-9 record. In their case, they must also hurdle their last two games, including against Magnolia Ice Cream. They must also hope that the Spinners will drop their two other games. Both the Port Masters and Spinners tote 5-6 records.

The Teethmasters managed to knot the count at 70-all after a long and hard chase starting in the third quarter. But the Titans stood up to the challenge as Francis Mercado came through with a clutch basket and Axel Doruelo hit two free throws with 23 seconds remaining.

The scores:

First Game

TELETECH 76—Mercado 16, Gelig 13, Villamin 13, Doruelo 8, Capus 8, Tang 5, Mendoza 4, Latoreno 4, Magdadaro 3, Estrada 2, Sierra 0, Tolentino 0.

HAPEE-PCU 72—Bucao 16, Castro 13, Moreno 12, Espinas 11, Solis 8, Belga 6, Sanz 4, Razoon 2, Gonzales 0.

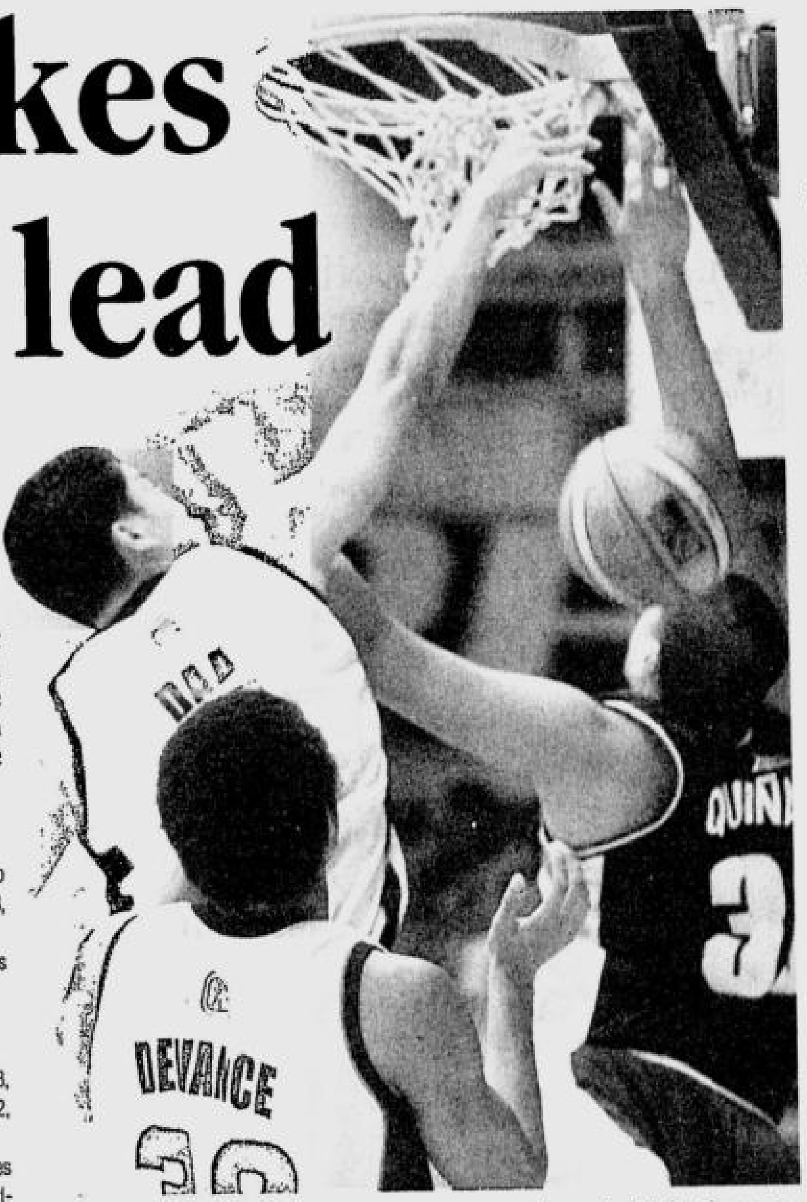
Quarters: 11-13, 35-29, 56-51, 76-72.

Second Game

TOYOTA OTIS 73—Devance 17, Casio 11, Aban 11, Daa 8, Coronel 6, Alcaraz 5, Andaya 4, Fajardo 3, Rodriguez 2, Oreta 2, Larong 2, Bautista 2, Aldave 0, Baluyot 0, Cabahug 0.

GRANNY GOOSE 64—Cruz 14, Latonio 10, Alfad 8, Ibanes 8, Grijaldo 7, Dela Peña 6, Quiñahan 4, Santos 3, David 2, Saldua 2, Ababon 0, Ferrer 0, Concha 0.

Quarters: 21-17, 39-30, 57-44, 73-64.



TOYOTA Otis' Dennis Daa swats away an undergoal stab by Granny Goose big man JR Quiñahan. JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

My cousin Lara Mae

By Percy D. Della

COMMENTARY

SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA—THERE THEY were, buried under a pile of junk mail from exiled Nigerian generals, replica Rolex dealers and assorted Viagra sales people.

One of the notes came from a long-lost friend in New York who got hold of me after all these years.

And what do you know. The guy only wanted the skinny on whether I've changed my wardrobe.

Have you started wearing socks? he asked.

The other item came from Manuel and Lauren Divina of Seattle, Washington. I knew right away that the word from the couple would be great.

I was the first to know from Manuel almost two years ago that a cousin, David Della—with help from wall-to-wall relatives and friends—had won a seat in the Seattle City Council.

After David's upset victory, politicians wooing Filipino voters of the Pacific Northwest have to go the extra mile.

Now they have to learn to sing karaoke, appear in basketball leagues, and eat breakfast of *tapsilog* (tenderloin beef strips, egg and fried rice).

I had no idea about Manuel's message this time around. Modest as always, Sonny (his nickname from boyhood), had merely forwarded an e-mail from his daughter Lara Mae.

Weird, but Sonny, a cousin of my late mom's, is about my age. That makes Lara Mae, his 28-year old daughter, a second cousin.

As brilliant relatives go, Lara Mae, the erstwhile sales and marketing chief of the NBA developmental league, America's version of Chino Trinidad's PBL, has moved on.

The e-mail says she has been named president and general manager of the Bakersfield (California) Jam, among the newest of the 12 farm teams that constantly ship talents to the NBA.

Check out the Bakersfield Californian newspaper story, she alerted her folks.

Sonny in turn alerted me and no sooner had he done just that than Lara Mae was calling on my cell phone.

Lara Mae had read my mind. Pictures are forthcoming to go with your story, *manong*, she assures. Please make sure the Californian gets the credit for the art, she reminded.

My cousin and I talked some more.

It is not about shattering the glass ceiling any longer.

It is now about destiny.

"My dream since I was 11 is coming true," she says.

It is a long way from her manageable target—becoming president and general manager of an NBA team.

Becoming the head honcho at the Bakersfield Jam is a damn good start.

Arriving in Seattle from the Philippines at a young age, Lara Mae heard the clarion call of basketball management early and often.

She was surrounded by a basketball-playing clan, including brothers Michael, 26, a computer engineering graduate and Mark, 25 a business major—an assortment of cousins and other relatives from the Divinas' hometown of Cuyapo, Nueva Ecija.

Today, clan members remain regulars of Seattle's neighborhood cage leagues, either as players or coaches.

Sometimes, Lara Mae joined the boys for a few three-on-three matches. But it was not the game that fired her interest, rather it was the whirl of errands before the start of a league, bush or major.

She began to explore the business side of basketball in high school as an unpaid volunteer of a now defunct Seattle women's basketball team.

In college she majored in business with emphasis on marketing to gain academic foothold on her profession of choice. After graduating from the Louisiana State University, she stayed at her alma mater to work on marketing the school to prospective students, alumni and the media.

She took a respite to work outside her box, dabbling in fashion and radio. But in no time she went back to marketing, this time making the NBA's developmental league known to the world.

The rest is not yet history, as far as Lara Mae is concerned. She has higher targets to shoot for.

To open doors of opportunity, the Bakersfield Jam president and general manager has a tip for aspiring executives out there: "Talk to people you meet in conferences, parties, everywhere. Network, network and network," she says.

Right at the moment, she has hit the ground running for the Jam.

"I am both excited and grateful for this opportunity to run the Bakersfield Jam as a model NBA D-League operation," she says.

"I am committed, like the Jam ownership, to offer a quality professional basketball product and family fun at affordable prices. The Jam's commitment to the Bakersfield community will be unparalleled."

Cossack Vodka riders could pull off Tour surprise

YOUNG AND INEXPERIENCED BUT NOT wanting in heart and talent, the Cossack Vodka riders get going in the Tanduay Padyak Pinoy 2006 bikathon starting today expecting to give the event's big guns a run for their money.

"I have young riders, but they cannot be taken for granted," warned two-time Tour ng Pilipinas champ Renato Dolosa, who will coach the Cossack team in the eight-day spectacle kicking off today from Quezon City to Cabanatuan City.

With a team that includes six rookies, Dolosa still entertains hopes of a grand achievement for Cossack. No team has a distinct edge in the Tour, according to observers.

Dolosa, winner of the Tour in 1992 and 1995, said he won't be surprised if one of his boys—his team has an average age of 21—contend in the individual race.

Renato Sambrano, last year's top rookie, captains Dolosa's squad with Michael Reyes, a member of the champion Colt 45 team, as his assistant. They are the only ones with prior Tour experience.

National junior champion Irish Valenzuela, Leonel Dimaano, Roberto Torres, Nilo Jasul, Edgardo Bellecer and Elli Camarino will be marking their debut this year.

Bellecer was a former winner of the Tour ng Nueva Vizcaya, while Camarino, the oldest at 28, has been campaigning in races most of his life.

ABDON: Biggest victory

Abdon humbles Bunyi in nat'l age group golf

JOHN KIER ABDON OUTDUELLED THE big-hitting Gino Bunyi, 6 and 5, for the boys' Class A crown yesterday as the favorites lived up to expectations in the DHL-WWWExpress national age-group championships at the Villamor Golf Club course.

Abdon, just one up after the morning round of the scheduled 36-hole final, pounced on the faltering Bunyi in the third nine to stretch his lead to four en route to his biggest victory yet.

Baguio bet James Chun gate-crashed the party of the Big City bets when he turned back Chepe Dulay, 3 and 2, in their showdown for the boys' Class B crown of the tourney organized for DHL-WWWExpress by the National Golf Association of the Philippines and the Junior Golf Foundation of the Philippines.

Bino dela Paz and Miggy Yee pulled off easy wins in boys' Class C and Class D, respectively.

Dela Paz made short work of Lloyd Go, 5 and 3, while Yee stamped his class on RJ Tallud, 6 and 5.

Prevailing in the girls' division were Chihiro Ikeda, Regina de Guzman, Maan Legaspi and Felicia Medalla.

Winners received their trophies from DHL-WWWExpress president Joe Feliciano and Gerry Handog of Jungolf Foundation.

Briones leads Team Ellie to SM badminton title

BRYAN RAFAEL BRIONES AND MICAH Ezra Mijares captured the 6-and-under category and powered Team Ellie to the overall title in the recent SM Storyland Junior Badminton Camp Tournament at the SM Southmall in Las Piñas.

Briones, adjudged as the most promising player among boys, and Mijares beat John Eldrich Lucio and Allysa Joy Nañola in the finals.

Team Ellie scored a clean sweep of all four divisions disputed with Jerico Roel-Chaleyreene de Guzman taking the 7-8 age group, Alyssa Rubio-Marie Jan Abigail Cotaco topping the 9-10 class and Joshua Rafael Cruz-Harlene Tabunan ruling the 11-12 division in the tourney which followed a weekend clinic conducted by former national team players.

The SM Storyland Camp, held in partnership with SM Storyland and backed by Kimoni Phils., Dunlop, Unilever, Selecta and Gerflor Taraflex, resumes this weekend with the clinic for the north side at SM Fairview. Top graduates will qualify for the tournament on May 21. For inquiries, call 8000614 or 9380506.

Bagging runner-up honors were Jon Eldrich Lucido-Alyssa Joy Nañola (6-under), Reymundo Antoine Opiana-Alanis Angela Balois (7-8), Joseph Nari Biola-Marie Christina de Vera (9-10) and Aileene Chavez-Erica Bianca Manalili (11-12).

Donor fatigue

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

I WAS ASTOUNDED TO READ THE other day that, despite its immense popularity and historical value, this year's Philippine Open golf championship lacks corporate sponsors. How on earth could the RP Open, the most prestigious golf tournament this side of the Pacific, be short of sponsors?

"Getting sponsors (for the Philippine Open) has become awfully difficult," Farren Hotham of the Asian Tour's marketing arm told veteran INQUIRER golf writer Jong Arcano. "It's been a real battle and it's quite amazing," added Farren, whose group is tasked to raise about $750,000 (about P39 million) for the 90th edition of the event set for May 25-28 at the fabled East course of Wack Wack.

It is not only the organizers of the Philippine Open who are finding it hard to raise money for their respective events. I was told that even the people behind the staging of the World Pool Championship at the PICC in November and the country's preparation for the Asian Games on Dec. 1-15 in Doha, Qatar, are also short of sponsors mainly because most of the major sponsors they want to tap have already committed themselves to bankroll the Manny Pacquiao-Oscar Larios non-title bout at the Big Dome on July 2.

The World Pool Championship in Manila needs $1.1 million (about P59 million) to be able to stage it here.

I say hosting the World Pool Championship in the Philippines is a good idea, but practical it is not, given the harsh economic difficulties of the times.

Complicating matters is the enormous expenses to be incurred by some 200 Filipino athletes who will be needing a budget of not less than P100 million for their training and participation in the Doha Asian Games.

There are simply too many costly sporting activities being slated here, which, in my humble opinion, will be doing more harm than good to Philippine sports in the long run. Unlike the US, China, Japan, South Korea or some countries in Europe awash with cash, the Philippines is not a rich country.

* * *

TENNIS Hero of Yesteryear: In the late 1940s and until the 1950s, Felicisimo "Totoy" Ampon was the country's most dominant player. Cool, cunning and calculated, the 5-foot-3 Ampon left large footprints on the sporting scene not only because he beat the best players of his time, but also because of his sportsmanship, honesty and fair play. He was named the first Athlete of the Year of the Philippine Sportswriters Association in 1950 and, just a few years ago, was voted by the PSA as one of five RP Athletes of the Century.

During his heyday, Ampon was considered by both local and foreign media as the greatest tennis player in the world pound for pound. He compensated for his lack of power and height through skillful placements, precise anticipation of his opponents' moves and awesome staying power. Among his victims were tennis giants Vic Seixas, Billy Talbert, Jack Kramer, Tom Brown and Ramanathan Krishnan.

Born on Oct. 26, 1920 to Felix Ampon and Josefa Hermoso in Sampaloc, Manila, Ampon started his tennis career at the age of 16. An accounting major at the Far Eastern University, Ampon proudly carried the green-and-gold colors of his school during his prime and rose to tennis greatness playing for the Philippine Davis Cup team from 1939 to 1968, the longest in living memory. He highlighted his Davis Cup campaign by leading the Philippines' 3-1 victory over India in the 1964 Asian zone. Then already 44, Ampon swept his singles matches against India's top-ranked Premjit Lall and Jorideep Mukherjea. And even though India won the doubles, Ampon's young partner, Johnny Jose, sealed the series by winning his singles assignment against Lall.

His favorite playing surface is Antuka, a baked clay court which is a good court when wet but very slippery when dry. It is on this surface where Ampon won the 1950 Pan-American tennis crown, beating No. 3 seed Tom Brown in four nerve-frazzling sets. Ampon also saw action in Europe, playing at the fabled Wimbledon in London and the French Open at the Roland Garros courts in Paris.

Ampon died in the US where he and his family migrated after his retirement.

Federer struggles past rival

ROME—NO. 1 ROGER FEDERER AND NO. 2 Rafael Nadal stayed on course for another final showdown with two-set victories over Italians in the second round of the Rome Masters on Wednesday.

Federer was tested by wild card Potito Starace before closing it, 6-3, 7-6 (2), and defending champion Nadal eased past Filippo Volandri, 6-1, 6-2, for his 49th straight win on clay.

"It's always hard to play local heroes, especially here in Italy," said Federer, mentioning previous matches at Foro Italico against Volandri and Andrea Gaudenzi.

Starace broke Federer twice in the second set and the Swiss needed seven game points to hold for 6-5. He saved his best tennis for the tiebreak though, serving his first ace of the match on the opening point, followed by a crosscourt backhand to end the match.

"You really have to beat him. He's not going to beat himself," said Federer, who began his day by meeting Pope Benedict XVI at the Vatican during the pope's weekly general audience.

Nadal won the first set against Volandri in 26 minutes. At 1-2 in the second, he saved three break points and reeled off the last five games. *AP*

Refs to call World Cup really tight

LONDON—PLAYERS BEWARE, YOUR World Cup could be over almost as soon as it begins.

The 23 referees at the tournament in Germany have been instructed to harshly deal with the foul play that has become the scourge of modern soccer. Elbowing, reckless fouls and other violent conduct will result in a red card, disciplinary action and missed matches.

Getting yellow cards also is going to be easier: Unsportsmanlike conduct such as shirt pulling, holding opponents and deliberately stopping opposing players will result in automatic yellows.

FIFA is trying to rid soccer of the bad habits that are ruining many games.

Soccer's decision makers approved modifications to rules that come into effect July 1, but decided the changes will be brought forward to introduce them at the June 9 tournament kickoff. *AP*

Heat, Clippers rip series foes

MIAMI—THE MIAMI HEAT STORMED TO AN EARLY LEAD over the New Jersey Nets and never looked back on Wednesday, rolling up a 111-89 win to even their best-of-seven Eastern Conference playoff series at 1-1.

Dwyane Wade scored 31 points, including 17 in the first quarter, while Shaquille O'Neal had 21 as Miami jumped out to a 25-4 lead and were never threatened.

Miami had fallen behind early in Game 1 and never recovered but set a completely different tone in Game 2, taking a 41-19 advantage at the end of the first quarter.

The series now moves to New Jersey for games three and four on Friday and Sunday.

"We played probably the best quarter of the year," Miami coach Pat Riley told reporters. "We needed it."

Jason Williams added 14 points for the Heat, who shot 53 percent from the field, and Udonis Haslem added 11 points and hauled down 10 rebounds.

"We didn't want to have two games in a row like that," O'Neal told reporters.

Vince Carter led New Jersey with 22 points, but the Nets shot just 40 percent and appeared out of synch right from the start of the game.

Richard Jefferson shook off an ankle injury he suffered in Game 1 to score 16 points for New Jersey, while Jason Kidd added 15 points.

"Their overall intent was greater and sharper than ours," New Jersey coach Lawrence Frank said.

In Phoenix, Elton Brand scored 27 points to lead the Los Angeles Clippers to a 122-97 win over the Suns.

The best-of-seven Western Conference series is tied 1-1, with games three and four in Los Angeles on Friday and Sunday.

Cuttino Mobley and Sam Cassell added 23 points for the Clippers, who led 65-51 at the half en route to an impressive offensive performance.

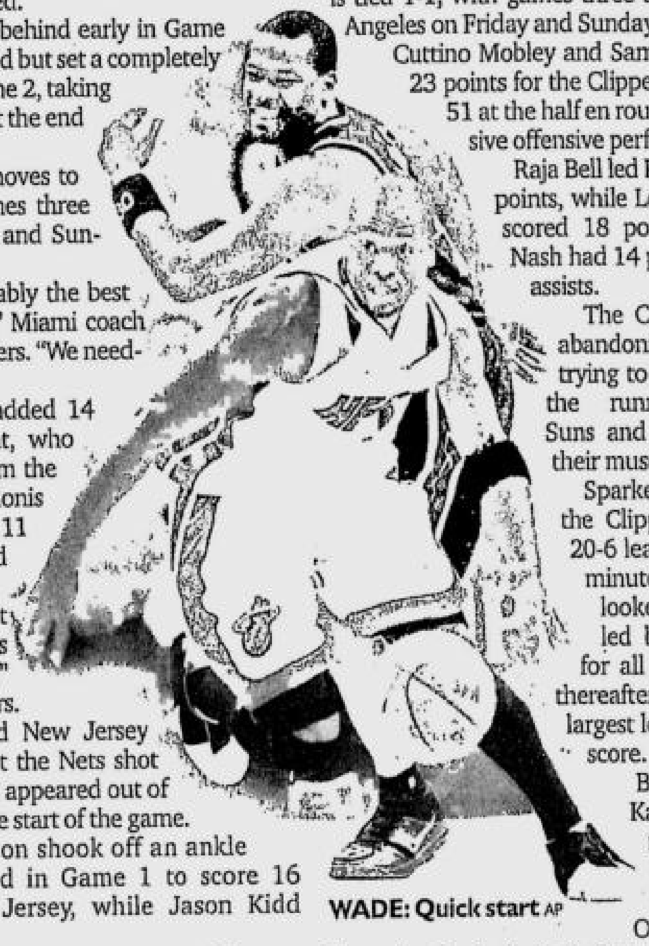
Raja Bell led Phoenix with 20 points, while Leandro Barbosa scored 18 points and Steve Nash had 14 points and eight assists.

The Clippers won by abandoning the idea of trying to keep pace with the running, gunning Suns and instead flexing their muscles.

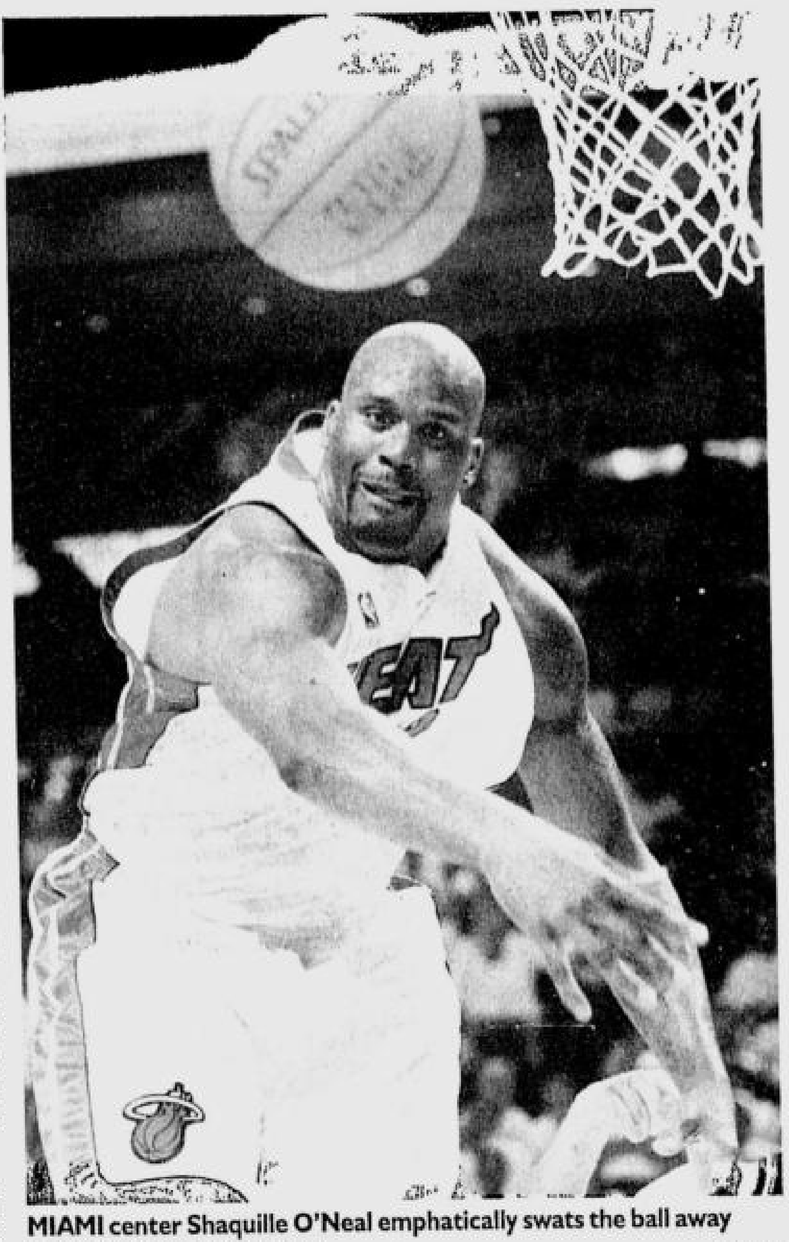
Sparked by Cassell, the Clippers raced to a 20-6 lead in the first six minutes and never looked back. They led by double digits for all but 26 seconds thereafter, and their largest lead was the final score.

Brand and Chris Kaman—who was neutralized by the quick pace of Game One—had Phoenix physically intimidated, particularly in the first half.

Before the break, the Clippers scored on virtually every possession. *Reuters, AFP*



WADE: Quick start AP



MIAMI center Shaquille O'Neal emphatically swats the ball away while defending the basket. REUTERS

Hornets' Paul top rookie

OKLAHOMA CITY—NEW ORleans point guard Chris Paul won the NBA's Rookie of the Year award on Wednesday after helping the Hornets double their win total in a season in which they were forced from their home city by Hurricane Katrina.

Paul was a runaway choice for the award, receiving all but one of the 125 first-place votes. Utah guard Deron Williams received the only other first-place vote.

It was the largest margin of victory since San Antonio's David Robinson was a unanimous choice in 1990.

Paul led all rookies in points (16.1), assists (7.8), steals (2.2), double-doubles (21), minutes played (36.4) and triple-doubles (2). He also became the second NBA rookie to lead the league in steals, joining Brevin Knight. *AP*

Yankees' Rodriguez silences critics, boss

NEW YORK—ALEX RODRIGUEZ ANswered critics—incuding Yankees boss George Steinbrenner—with a fifth inning home run that helped New York to a 7-3 victory over Boston here on Wednesday.

"A-Rod" homered with two outs in the bottom of the fifth to snap a tie and convert jeers to cheers at Yankee Stadium.

Entering in a 7-for-38 slump and coming off a two-error game in Tuesday's 14-3 loss that drew the ire of Yankee fans and Steinbrenner, Rodriguez's struggles continued in his first two at-bats.

With the Yankees trailing, 2-0, and Jason Giambi on first, Rodriguez struck out on three pitches. The boos increased in the third when he followed Giambi's two-run home run with a weak foul out to first base.

"It's more of a frustration (from the fans)," Rodriguez said. "They're antsy just like we all are. They want to see me do well. But when you stink, you deserve to get booed."

"Alex is phenomenal," Giambi added. "At the end of the year, his numbers are going to be unbelievable. That's why you can't get too upset in such a short period." *AFP*

Jao in flawless Shell start

JAO: Seeking No. 10

DEFENDING CHAMPion Jolet Jao proved he's still the country's best road rider when he swept both Expert division races during the kickoff of the 2006 Shell Advance-San Mig Coffee Superbikes Series at the Batangas Racing Circuit recently.

Jao pulled off his victory double at the expense of his perennial rival Benjo Mendoza with Roderick Chua placing third in both 10-lap races.

He clocked 15 minutes 49.458 seconds in topping the morning race, finishing 7.882 seconds ahead of Mendoza. Jao won by 4.270 seconds in the second race.

Jao, eyeing his 10th crown this season, was even more unforgiving in the afternoon, improving his earlier winning time with a 15:47.888 clocking after setting the day's fastest lap time of 1:42.964.

Wacky del Rosario and John Diego checked in fourth and fifth, respectively.

Sharing honors with Jao was Aries Padiernos, who also scored a sweep in the Sub 400 cc division of this event sanctioned by the National Motorcycle Safety and Sport Association (NAMSSA) and sponsored by Pilipinas Shell, San Mig Coffee, Casino Filipino, Yokohama, Denso, Arai and Shoei.

SPORTSWATCH

Taekwondo tilt slated

ACTION IN SM SUMMER SPORTS TOUR REsumes today with the staging of taekwondo competitions as jins in various age divisions battle for supremacy at SM Southmall in Las Piñas. Taekwondo is the featured discipline in a series of sports events lined up by SM chain of malls in its effort to help contribute to the country's sports programs. It has so far been staged at 12 SM malls. Among the events to be disputed are the junior men's and women's division (novice and advance) and grade school boys and girls (novice and advance). Also on tap in the summer schedule are wushu demo and competitions, football exhibition games and its centerpiece JVC Open junior badminton championships. The football fun games actually resumed at SM San Lazaro yesterday and will end today.

Pasay derby today

MORE THAN 60 MATCHES WILL SPICE UP ANother exciting edition of the Pasay Cockpit Cockers Association (PCCA) 4-cock derby series today at the air-conditioned Pasay City Cockpit. This will be the seventh of eight derbies which are the basis in selecting the 2006 PCCA Cocker of the Year. Main sponsor is Sagupaan Complexor 3000. It's still a wide open battle among the top contenders in this event sponsored mainly by Sagupaan Complexor 3000. Up next on May 19 at Pasay Cockpit is the RS Fairview 4-cock derby of Roger Segismundo, who confirmed no less than 40 sure entries. For additional info, please call 843-1890, 843-1746 and 816-6750.

SJC hosts 4-cocker

THE ARIEL AND SHIO 4-COCK DERBY KICKS off Monday, May 15 at the San Juan Coliseum. According to hosts Renato Shio and Ariel Garovillo, no less than 70 fights are expected on Monday's showdown which will start at 5 p.m. For an entry fee of P11,000, the total guaranteed prize is P300,000 in the event sponsored by Sagupaan Complexor 3000. Meanwhile, 15 more additional entries (ten local and five foreign) were confirmed for the SJC 9-Cock International Derby which is set on June 5, 7 and 9.

RACING

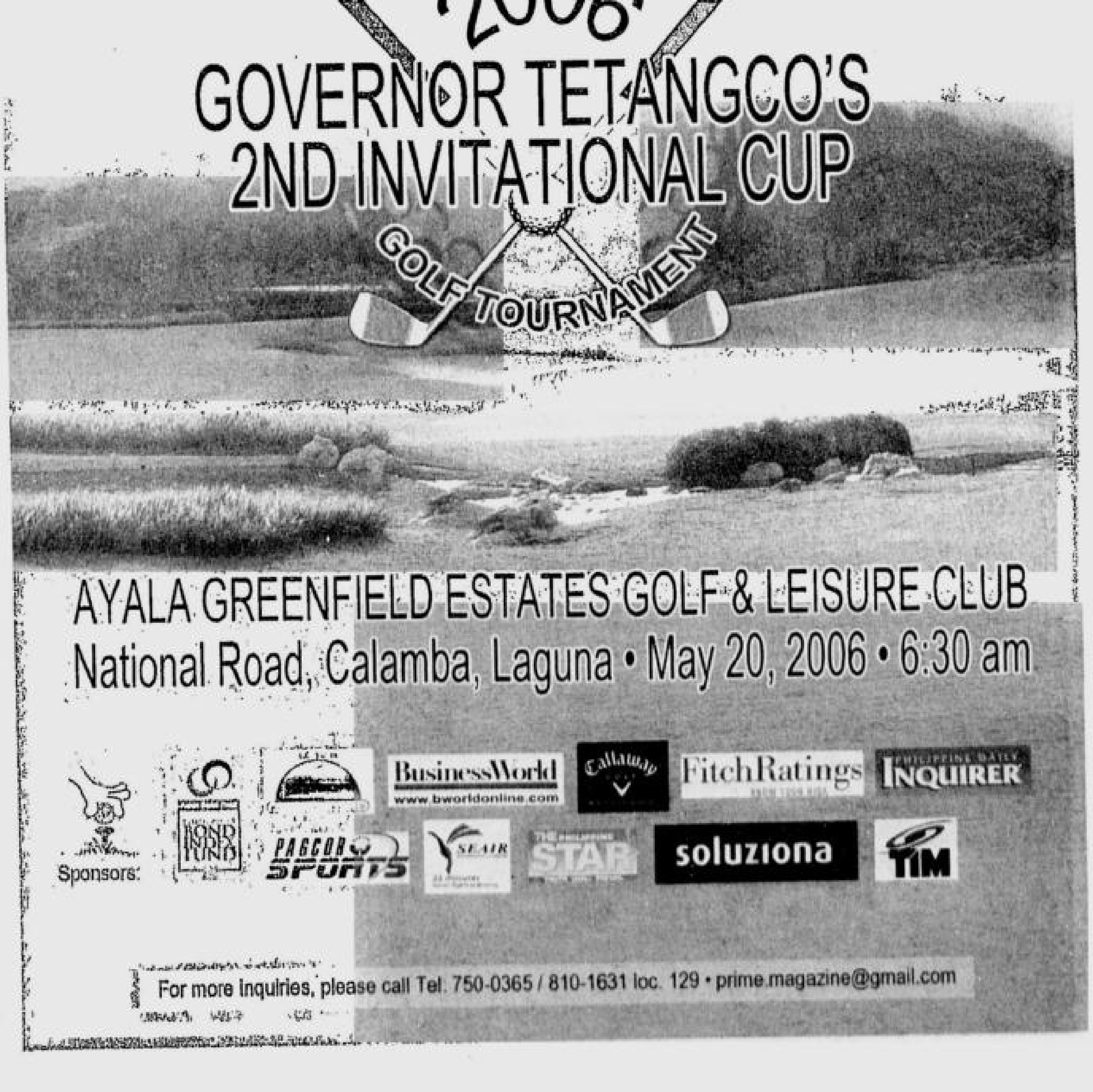
BY TOP CHOICE

Race 1—(Tri)— Ocean Dignity (3), Accomplice (5), Ikaw Lamang (4)
Race 2—(Qrt/Tri)—Streisand (6), Rock Attack Attack (4), Scene Stealer (3), Blue Bolero (1)
Race 3 (Qrt/Tri)—Opening Statement (6), Tango With Me (5), Bull Rider (2), Beagle Two (1)
Race 4—(Qrt/Tri)—Zaniga (4), Striker (7), Angie Gray (6), Reigns Supreme (1)
Race 5—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Ole! Ole! Ole! (8), Medal's Time (4), Power Dance (9), Expiditer (5), Steel Smasher (3)
Race 6—Monalisa (2), Mighty Mare (1)
Race 7—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Common Goal (8), Reign Of Roses (7), Sound Of The Wind (6), Replica (1), Fair Urduja (3)
Race 8—(Qrt/Tri)—Jayvie's Godfather (6), Tanging Ikaw (1), Habagat (2), Quick Pick (3)
Race 9—(Super 6/Qrt/Tri)—Pyramid Relaunch (1), Delly (8), Quant Je Puis (6), Makati Haven (3), Bunker Buster (5), Do It David (7)

Chess at SCOOP

CHESS AND SOFTBALL ARE THE MAIN TOPics in today's session of the Sports Communicators Organization of the Philippines (SCOOP) at the Kamayan Padre Faura.

Appearing in the Accel-sponsored session starting at 10:30 a.m. are RP men's members GMs Eugene Torre, Joey Antonio, Mark Paragua, Darwin Laylo, Oliver Dimakiling, Wesley So and women's members Sheerie Joy Lomibao, Beverly Mendoza and Catherine Pereña who will compete in the World Chess Olympiad next week.



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Alcantara nails 2 titles in Sri Lanka

ALCANTARA

COLOMBO, SRI LANKA—Top seed Francis Casey Alcantara of the Philippines seized the singles and doubles titles in the Asian 14-Under Series Week 1 at the Sri Lanka Tennis Association Tennis Center last Sunday.

Alcantara, the 14-year-old rising star of RP tennis from Malaybalay City, Bukidnon, worked behind a solid forehand to win the singles over Japan's Khohhei Kamono, 7-5, 6-4, before teaming up with Malaysia's Juan Los Santos to take the doubles title over India's Aarjay Hansoti and Vishwesh Sinha, 6-0, 2-6, 6-2.

"I tried to be consistent with my game," said Alcantara, a high school sophomore at Xavier University in Cagayan de Oro.

Alcantara, now ranked No. 1 14-under player by the Asian Tennis Federation, also won the singles title in the first leg and the doubles crown in the second leg of the Group 1 Asian Championships held in Bangkok last month.

The only Filipino in the ITF Team that will play in the Young Stars Tour in Europe in July, Alcantara also ruled the ATF 14-Under Series Masters in Melbourne, Australia, last year.

He will see action in the World Juniors tilt in Indonesia next week.

Warriors make Final 4

TALISAY CITY—THE TOYOTA-Iloilo Warriors claimed the fourth and final spot in the Visayas Division semifinals of the ML Kwarta Padala Mindanao Visayas Basketball Association (MVBA) First Conference last Tuesday by nipping the West Negros College Mustangs, 74-70, on the road at the Talisay City Gym.

The IBL-backed Warriors's win gave them an unassailable two-game lead over the Mustangs in the tourney backed by ML Kwarta Padala, Cokaliong Shipping Lines, Nature's Spring Drinking Water, Molten, Panasonic and Sulpicio Lines.

The National Students champion Mustangs held a six-point lead after three periods.

STANDINGS	W	L
Visayas Division		
M. Lhuillier-Cebu	8	0
Landmaster-Toledo	5	2
Mantawi Traders	3	4
Toyota-Iloilo Warriors	2	5
West Negros College	0	7
Mindanao Division		

Semifinals Best-of-3

No. 1 seed Iligan Archangels tied with No. 4 Montana-Davao, 1-1.

No. 2 PacMan-GenSan tied with No. 3 Pryce Pharma-MisOr, 1-1.

The scores:

TOYOTA-ILOILO 74—Balgos 20, Senierez 19, Bautista 10, Sencil 7, Sanz 5, Sinco 5, Leonida 2, Bayhon 2.

WEST NEGROS 70—Tizon 24, Olarte 15, Espiritu 8, Deocadis 8, Millarin 7, Vergara 4, Laurenio 4, Dapar 2.

Quarters: 21-21, 37-35, 50-56, 74-70

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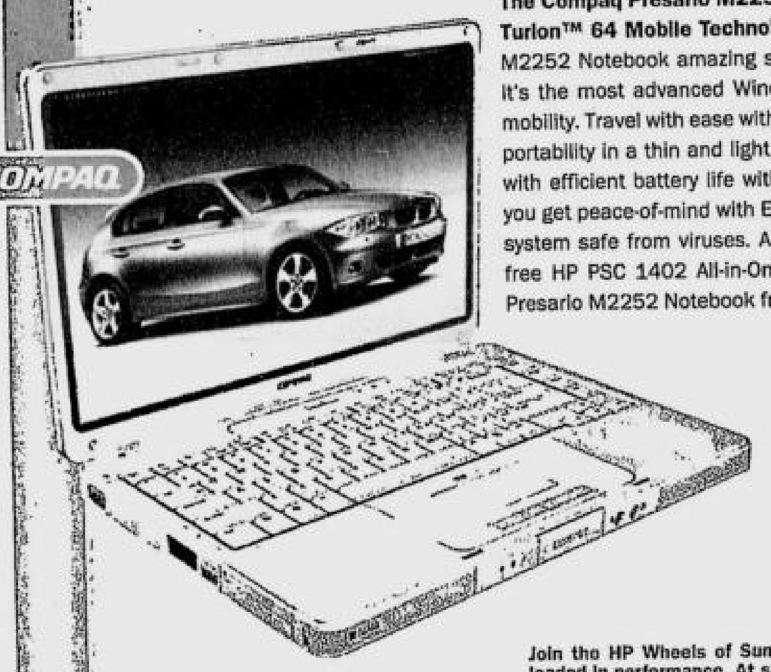

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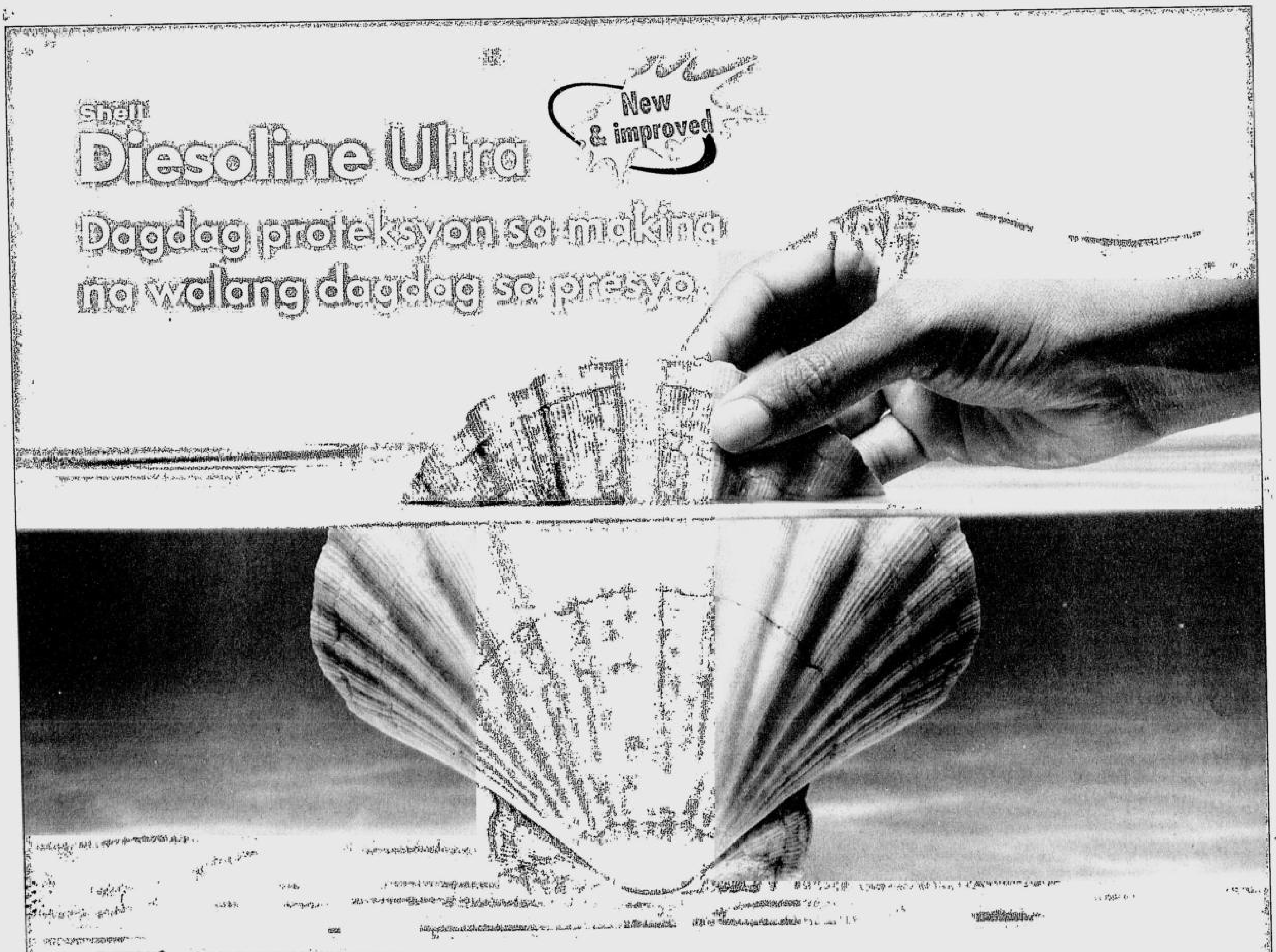

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Zsazsa: Dolphy II?

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

ZSA ZSA Padilla: "He said I was funny in 'Legal Wife.'"

IT HASN'T BEEN LOST ON CONCERT-GOers: Zsazsa Padilla has a flair for comedy.

Onstage, Zsazsa debunks her sultry chanteuse image with wacky one-liners and quick quips.

And then she won Best Actress in the last Metro Manila Film Festival for her comedic turn in "Ako Legal Wife: Mano Po 4."

Is she the next Dolphy? Is she following in the footsteps of the country's Comedy King, who also happens to be her life partner?

"No," she protests when INQUIRER Entertainment brings up the prospect. "I can't imagine… I can't absorb the idea!"

She admits, however, that 17 years of togetherness invariably ends in osmosis.

"I've definitely imbibed his humor," she says.

Dolphy himself thinks Zsazsa is a blast.

"When we watched 'Ako Legal Wife,' he told me I was funny," she recalls. "Before that premiere night, I kept asking him: 'What if the people don't laugh?' I held his hand throughout the screening. He was so cool. He said, 'Don't worry.'"

She believes they complement one another. "He's very laid-back. I'm the worrier. If someone in the family coughs, I'm already thinking: Could it be cancer? Should we go to the hospital?"

The topic of weddings makes Zsazsa

ZSAZSA/ A2-6

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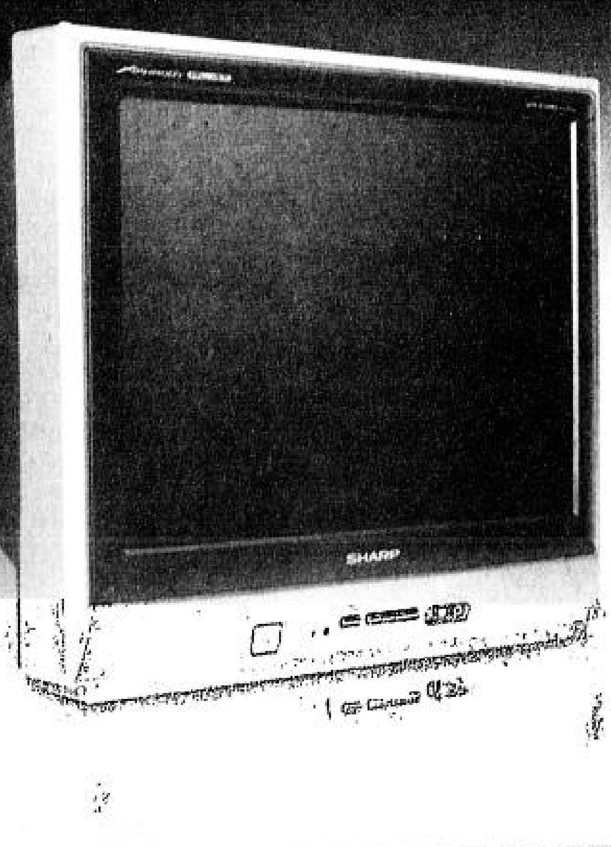

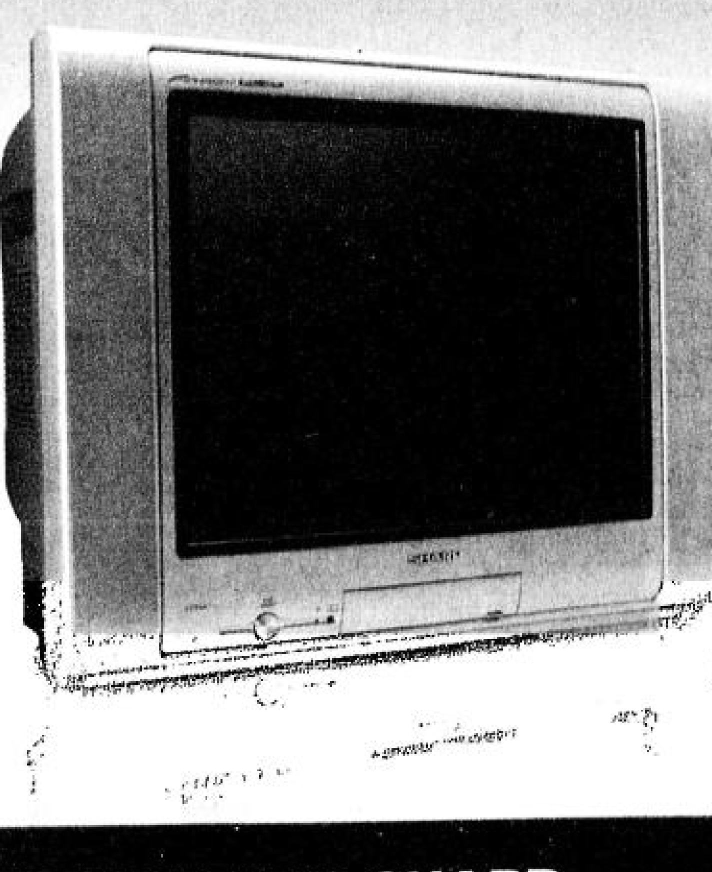

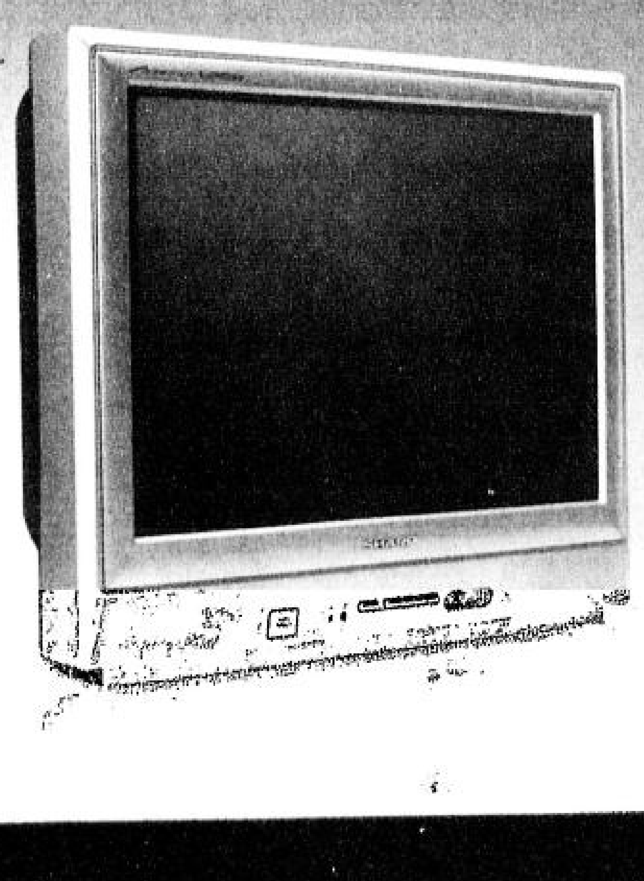

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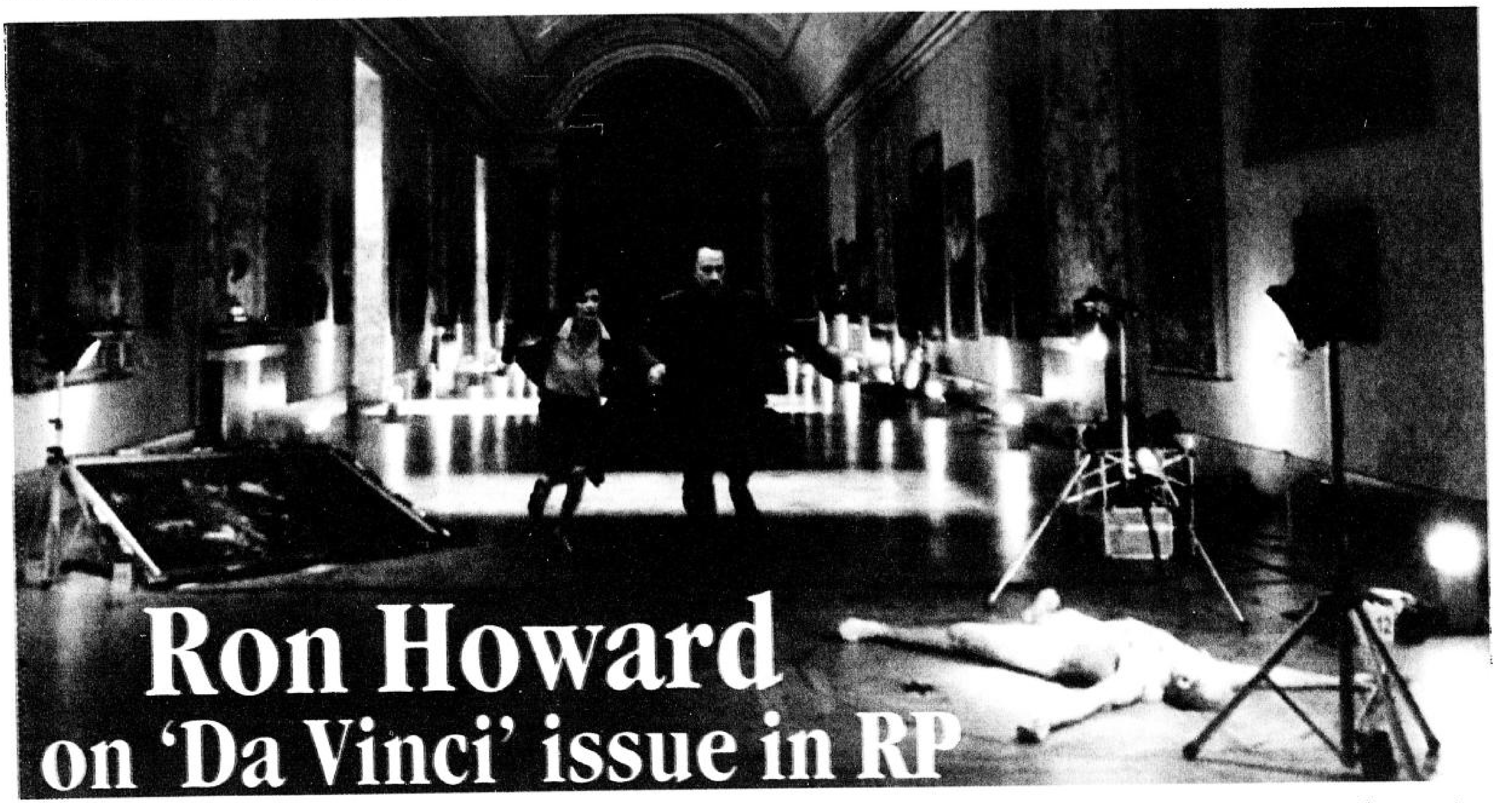

Ron Howard on 'Da Vinci' issue in RP

…and INQUIRER Entertainment gets a privileged peek at this year's most controversial movie

ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD

Ruben V. Nepales

LOS ANGELES—INQUIRER GOT an exclusive peek at this year's most controversial and most talked about movie, the adaptation of **Dan Brown's** bestseller, "The Da Vinci Code."

Director **Ron Howard** himself introduced the 35-minute footage to us last Monday morning at the Backstage Theatre inside Sony Pictures Studios. The filmmaker behind the 2001 Oscar and Golden Globe Best Picture Award winner, "A Beautiful Mind," explained that he was still editing "The Da Vinci Code" for its opening at Cannes this month so he could only show a portion to us. "I wanted you to have a feel of the movie," he said.

What was shown to us by the former child actor was footage of the major plot scenes in sequence. The most gripping scenes involved a nude **Paul Bettany**, as Silas, the albino monk, flagellating himself. The 60 million folks on this earth who have read Dan Brown's suspenseful novel about how a murder at the Louvre triggers exciting events dealing with art and religion know that **Tom Hanks** plays Harvard symbologist Robert Langdon.

The rest of the formidable international cast includes **Audrey Tautou** (Sophie Neveu), **Ian McKellen** (Sir Leigh Teabing), **Jean Reno** (Bezu Fache) and **Alfred Molina** (Bishop Aringarosa).

After the screening and a quick break, Ron came back to the theater for a press con. We got to ask the filmmaker to comment about the controversy that the film is stirring in the Philippines. We just learned that the Sangguniang Panglunsod of Lucena approved a resolution last May 4 saying it is "strongly against the showing and presentation of 'The Da Vinci Code' in all cinemas or theaters within the territorial jurisdiction of the city of Lucena." We also read that Lipa Archbishop **Ramon Arguelles** also called for the ban of the film.

Below are excerpts of our press con with Ron.

Some members of Opus Dei, local governments and conservative religious groups in the Philippines are reportedly calling for a ban on "The Da Vinci Code." Can you comment on this?

I'm a filmmaker, a storyteller—and so freedom of artistic expression is at the center of my whole, my reason to exist. I fully respect and understand any audience member's choice not to see a movie. But to deny other people who may find value in the story the right to see it, that's kind of militant. I don't advocate militancy in enforcing or defending belief systems because I think that leads to oppression, violence and hatred. I wouldn't support or advocate that. Individual choice? Absolutely.

The other thing that I would say is that no one has actually seen the film. I don't have it ready. [Until today] I couldn't even show it to folks like you, whom I'd like to show it to. So the fact is that anyone who is talking about the film—let's be honest—they're utilizing the high profile status of the story and the publicity that's swirling around the movie to make sure their own ideas are heard. That's okay, too, but let's understand as well what that is.

Are you glad there is so much controversy surrounding this movie, or is it bothering you?

I have mixed feelings about it because it's not my nature at all to be confrontational, combative or provocative. I chose this story because I thought that many of the ideas in this novel were very thought-provoking and very intriguing. As a storyteller, I thought about it in great detail and decided that it was a great way to take a work of fiction that many people would want to see on film and actually generate discussion and debate. So ultimately, I feel that's a very healthy thing. When fiction stimulates the mind and results in a dialogue between [groups of] people, that's a good thing.

From the Philippines to the Vatican and even in a newspaper in Norway, there's a lot of discussion going on about the book and movie. How aware are you of all these?

The Internet is a fabulous thing; if the studio tries to hide something, I find it anyway (laughter). I have a sense of how people are responding. I've had many conversations with **Dan Brown** who has been aware of the novel stirring a similar kind of controversy for years. I get back to the fact that, while I am not the kind of person who seeks out controversy, I am not surprised that the story and the premise of this particular thriller are stirring that kind of discussion and that articles are being written about it, pro and con.

One of the things that good fiction has to offer from time to time is that it will stimulate some debate and discussion. It's part of the fun of going to see it. I hope the movie is exciting and people who don't want to have a care in the world would want to go and watch the mystery unfold in an interesting way. I hope they enjoy the movie. I think it works on a number of levels.

I just came back from Chile which, like the Philippines, is a predominantly Catholic country. Do you think the book and movie will shake people's beliefs? Were you yourself affected? Did you learn something from reading the book or making the film?

First of all, I think we tend to underestimate the intelligence of readers and moviegoers when it comes to something like "The Da Vinci Code"—which is a novel, a work of fiction—and the way they respond to it. People are far more capable of reading a novel or seeing a movie and making some really healthy, constructive decisions themselves as to what is thought-provoking and what isn't, and [what is] part of interesting entertainment.

What I myself have learned, I am not going to reveal. But… working on this film was sort of a life-changing experience for me on a lot of levels. Spending that time in Europe, learning about the history and looking back at the story theologically was fascinating. I am not going to tell you my conclusions because that's personal, but it's the kind of story that does create really interesting conversation. What's [useful] to acknowledge is that human beings have not solved all the mysteries of the world. That doesn't take away from our need for faith because some questions will never be answered. [For me] that comes back to a need for faith and that's a pure thing.

There were earlier reports that you were trying to tone down the controversial theological points. Were there debates on how faithful the movie should be to the book?

Before the adaptation began, there was a sort of discussion about the theological aspects. I have to say I respect the executives at Sony because they quickly said no. They took my position—that we know what this story is and we understand that some of the ideas are controversial and we're not going to try to mollify the critics. This is a movie, not the book. It will be interesting to see what people think of it. I made some creative choices that are my own. Whether people think that makes it more intense or less intense, will be part of the discussion as well. But we ultimately decided it would be foolish to tone it down.

What about the request to insert a disclaimer that this is a work of fiction?

When you put a disclaimer on a work of fiction, you're sort of removing the fun of it. What you're trying to do is get an audience to suspend disbelief and go along on the ride. As much as I acknowledge that the movie deals with some themes that can be very controversial for some people, I am also trying to serve an audience that really wants to go and lose themselves in a movie and have a great time.

How do you think the movie will fare in predominantly Catholic countries?

We've discovered that the presales in a number of the countries that are predominantly Catholic have been very good. Sales of the book have also been good in those countries. I think that people in those places have lived for a long time with a lot of complex issues surrounding their church. I think they're actually more comfortable with that in a way and less threatened because they know what they believe. That's just my theory. I suspect that people will see it, be intrigued, talk about it the way they talked about the novel—and go on with their lives.

There are so many interesting sections in the book and probably in the movie as well. Which scene did you enjoy filming the most?

There are so many fantastic scenes, I am not sure I can limit it to one. But I can limit it to two. The opening sequence was exciting to shoot because we did much of it in the Louvre but also, cinematically it was very important to establish the right tone, the sense of the movie as a thriller, a suspense piece. We achieved an authentic feel by really being in the Louvre and using much of the real artwork. So, directorially, that was a challenge. I really like the way it turned out. It's also a scene that's well remembered from the book. I wanted to capture that spirit as much as possible for the movie.

The other one is a sequence at Sir Leigh Teabing's (Ian McKellen's character) estate, Chateau de Villette. Here many of the provocative conspiracy theories are presented. It is an important section in the novel. As a director who loves working with great actors, it was a terrific opportunity because here you had a crucial section with **Tom Hanks, Audrey Tautou** and **Ian McKellen** all sort of circling each other and debating these wild ideas that are really at the center of our story's mystery.

What kind of research did you do? In what sections did you adhere most closely to the book?

I didn't speak with any Opus Dei members but I did a great deal of research about virtually many of the aspects of the movie. [As for] identifying how similar it is to the novel, I decline to do that because part of the fun for people who have read the novel is going to see for themselves what they think of the movie adaptation. It's very frustrating when you have a novel of this quality, a story that's this interesting, because it's a big book.

So, I did have to make some creative decisions and probably somewhere down the line, some of the scenes that one might remember from the book that didn't make it into our final cut may wind up in a longer version for DVD release. We made those difficult choices to make the film really work and stand on its own as a movie. At the end of the day, this is a movie experience. It's not just someone reading the novel.

Did you try to find new codes and symbols in the paintings of Da Vinci?

I met with a couple of art historians who explained to me the common symbolism used particularly by the Renaissance painters. That was really interesting. When I was filming at the Louvre and I had a moment to pause, I could read more into the paintings because I did understand the hidden language and it was rewarding. It was great. It also gave me a headache (laughter).

I don't think it has changed the way I look at art; I still look at art in an emotional way rather than look for subtle communications. One thing that I did is visually build some codes into the movie. I don't want to give clues away and it's going to be easier for people to find it once they have the DVD and they can freeze the frames. But we built in some symbols into some of the compositions and I did them as a kind of a game. I worked them out with **Dan Brown**. It was really fun but I also did it because, as a director, I wanted another reason to frame certain images in a slightly unusual way because this story takes place in a very short period of time.

Are you aware of the industries that have sprung up around the whole "Da Vinci Code" phenomenon?

Yes. Very early on, within weeks after deciding that I wanted to do the movie, **Brian Grazer**, my producing partner at Imagine, **Akiva Goldsman**, the writer, and I went on the "Da Vinci Code" tour in London and in Paris. The person giving the tour didn't know that we were working on the film and that we had already read the novel three or four times each. He kept describing everything about the story in great detail and at a certain point we said, we really know the story. Just drive us to the places and talk about the history. It was great—this blending of real places, verifiable factoids with these conspiracy theories that made the novel popular. During filming, I got to virtually live the Da Vinci Code Tour for about four or five months and it was fun and eye-opening. You do learn a lot about your world.

You have directed Tom several times. How is your collaboration with him at this stage in your lives?

Early on, when I seriously began considering doing the movie, Tom gave me a call and said, "Do you want to talk about 'The Da Vinci Code'?" He had read it and really liked it. He was intrigued about playing a career academic and man of that [level of] intellect. He had a real instant sense of the character that I thought was absolutely authentic. I really wanted authenticity in the characters to counterbalance the strangeness of the story. One of the things that he kept saying was, "Let's get as much of the book into the movie as possible." He was a big advocate of that. He has a fantastic bullshit detector. He wants to try to find the truth in his character and present it as much as possible so he was never interested in trying to turn it into something that it wasn't—some kind of a superhero, super sleuth of a role. He approached it in a kind of Hitchcockian way. He's an Everyman who is not used to being exposed to violence, not used to being threatened himself but used to solving things with his mind, not his physicality. He is suddenly thrown into a very dangerous situation.

I can talk about two things that we did with the Langdon character that won't hurt your experience when seeing the film. One is that, while "Angels and Demons" precedes "The Da Vinci Code," in our movie version that hasn't happened. So Langdon has never been involved in a case before. Our movie Langdon is truly is an innocent in terms of never having been involved in a criminal investigation. The other thing was that we made Langdon a bit more of a skeptic so that he is debating and questioning a lot of the clues that are coming up. It makes him again a little more like an audience member; somebody that the audience can relate to because he's seeing a lot of possibilities all the time. That's the way Tom's mind works. Frankly, if **Tom Hanks** did not become an actor, I am really certain that he would have become a high profile academic. He loves history. He loves that kind of problem-solving. He's fascinated by the world and the way it works, loves to talk and think about it, loves to consider all the possibilities so he took to this character really well.

Are you making "Angels and Demons" (another novel by Dan Brown) later on?

We have no immediate plans to do "Angels and Demons." There's a great character in that one. We have so many what-ifs in this movie that I don't want to get into the what-ifs of that one (laughter). We'll face those production problems as they come.

Any plans to act again?

No. I have so many films that I want to make and not enough time to make them. So I don't have any plans to act.

(E-mail the columnist at rvnepales_5585@yahoo.com.)

RON Howard: "I'm a storyteller."

FEEDBACK

'Da Vinci' defender

From Jojo Iligan (joeyiligan05171966@yahoo.com):

AN ANTI-PORNOGRAPHY group yesterday said it will file a complaint today against the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board for allowing the importation of the film "The Da Vinci Code."

The Philippine Alliance Against Pornography said the film violates Presidential Decree 1986 which bars the MTRCB from importing any film that are deemed libelous or defamatory to the good name and reputation of any person, whether living or dead.

Can't these idiots do anything worth doing? They are thinking with their other heads! Morons… I hope they all die. Of STD. Any STD will do. Idiots!

Right on the head

From Erik dela Peña (concernedfilipino@gmail.com), Quezon City:

I FEEL THAT NESTOR Torre hit the nail on the head when he noted: "In different ways, most of the five remaining finalists are deserving of victory in terms of talent, so the final decision is likely to be really close, and could depend on the prospective winner's grit and charisma, above all else."

This comes as particularly insightful given that press releases in the Philippine Daily Inquirer regarding the requirements for "Pinoy Idol" have the age limit pegged at 28. Not to be age-ist, but older singers of 28 and 29 can often given younger singers of 16 to 20 a good run for their money in terms of sheer grit and experience. There's no venue on local television for singers in their 30s, and that isn't right, especially since "American Idol" is all about that dream. Given that Taylor Hicks, Mandisa, Bo Bice, and Constantine Maroulis all made the cut at peak ages of 28 and 29 (Hicks at 30), doesn't it seem right to extend the age limit for "Philippine Idol to 30? It's for this reason that Oprah Winfrey launched her own talent show for singers above 30, and the winner, Lashell Griffin, got a record deal with Sony!

Who's that boy?

From Homer Yulo (homer_d_great@yahoo.com), Tokyo, Japan

YOU HAVE A COLumn about a child "star"? named BJ?… who is he… *sikat ba yun? Sana kung mag*-feature *kayo ng* artist *sa column nyo yung makakarelate naman kami… at hindi yung kung sino di namin kilala. Yun lang po.* That story is not interesting at all. Comment *lang to ha* so dont be offended.

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3 M. I. - 3
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1 POSEIDON
2 M. I. - 3
3 APOY SA DIBDIB NG SAMAR

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2 WHEN A STRANGER CALLS
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2 POSEIDON
3 RESERVED
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POSEIDON
POSEIDON
AQUAMARINE
REINCARNATION
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D LUCKY ONES
SILENT HILL
M:I:III
THE WILD
APOY SA DIBDIB NG SAMAR

SM NORTH EDSA
POSEIDON
SILENT HILL
REINCARNATION
M:I:III
REINCARNATION
AQUAMARINE
POSEIDON
M:I:III

SM CITY DASMARINAS
M:I:III
CHINESE TALL STORY
APOYSA DIBDIB NGSAMAR
POSEIDON

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
SUBMERGED
ICE AGE 2
REINCARNATION
M:I:III
POSEIDON
SILENT HILL
POSEIDON
THE WILD
D LUCKY ONES
PAMAHIIN
M:I:III
APOY SA DIBDIB NG SAMAR

SM CITY STA. MESA
POSEIDON
POSEIDON
M:I:III
SILENT HILL
REINCARNATION
D LUCKY ONES
AQUAMARINE
SENTINEL
APOYSA DIBDIB NGSAMAR
PAMAHIIN

SM CITY BICUTAN
POSEIDON
M:I:III
SILENT HILL
POSEIDON

SM CITY SAN LAZARO
THE WILD
M:I:III
APOYSA DIBDIB NGSAMAR
SILENT HILL
M:I:III
POSEIDON

SM CITY MANILA
M:I:III
AQUAMARINE
REINCARNATION
POSEIDON
THE WILD
POSEIDON
APOY SA DIBDIB NG SAMAR
M:I:III
SILENT HILL
POSEIDON
D LUCKY ONES
PAMAHIIN

SM CITY SOUTHMALL
POSEIDON
POSEIDON
M:I:III
M:I:III
SENTINEL
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AQUAMARINE
REINCARNATION
PAMAHIIN

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POSEIDON
M:I:III
SILENT HILL

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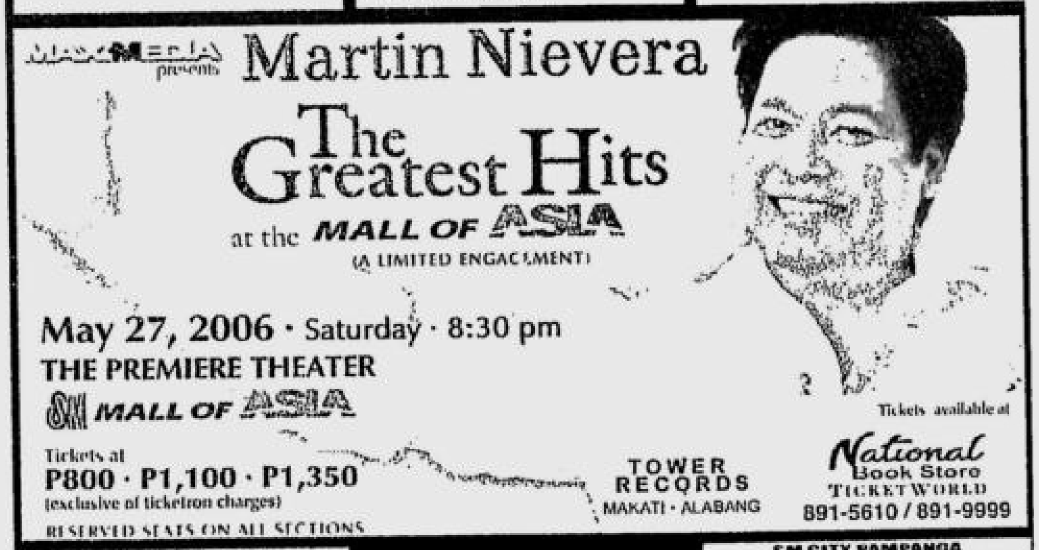
SILENT HILL
POSEIDON
M:I:III
POSEIDON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THE WILD
M:I:III
POSEIDON
APOYSA DIBDIB NGSAMAR

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POSEIDON
M:I:III
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APOYSA DIBDIB NGSAMAR
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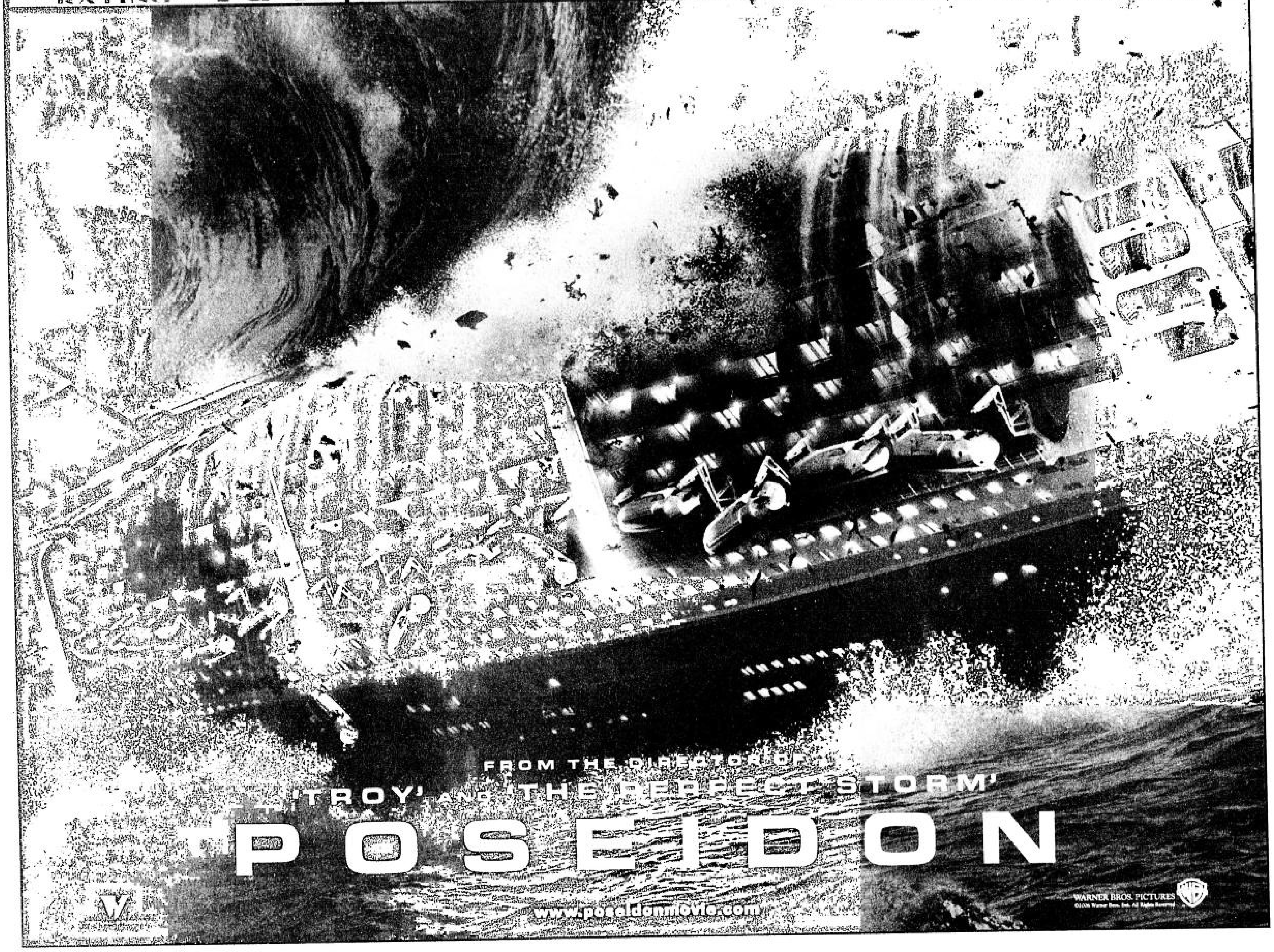

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G1	1 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3	2 POSEIDON	3 REINCARNATION	4 POSEIDON
G4	1 POSEIDON	2 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3	3 THX POSEIDON 12:50, 3:05, 5:20, 7:35, 9:50 GUARANTEED SEATS	
	4 SENTINEL	5 AQUAMARINE	6 POSEIDON	7 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3
GB1	1 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3	2 POSEIDON		
GB3	1 THX MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3 GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX POSEIDON 1:25, 3:40, 5:55, 8:10, 10:25 GUARANTEED SEATS		
	3 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3 GUARANTEED SEATS	4 POSEIDON 12:50, 3:05, 5:20, 7:35, 9:50 GUARANTEED SEATS	5 POSEIDON 2:30, 4:45, 7:00, 9:15, 11:30 GUARANTEED SEATS	
ATC	1 THX POSEIDON	2 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3		
	3 POSEIDON	4 AQUAMARINE	5 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3	
ACC	1 POSEIDON	2 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3	3 POSEIDON	4 SUBMERGED
M2	1 POSEIDON	2 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3		
	3 REINCARNATION	4 POSEIDON	5 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3	

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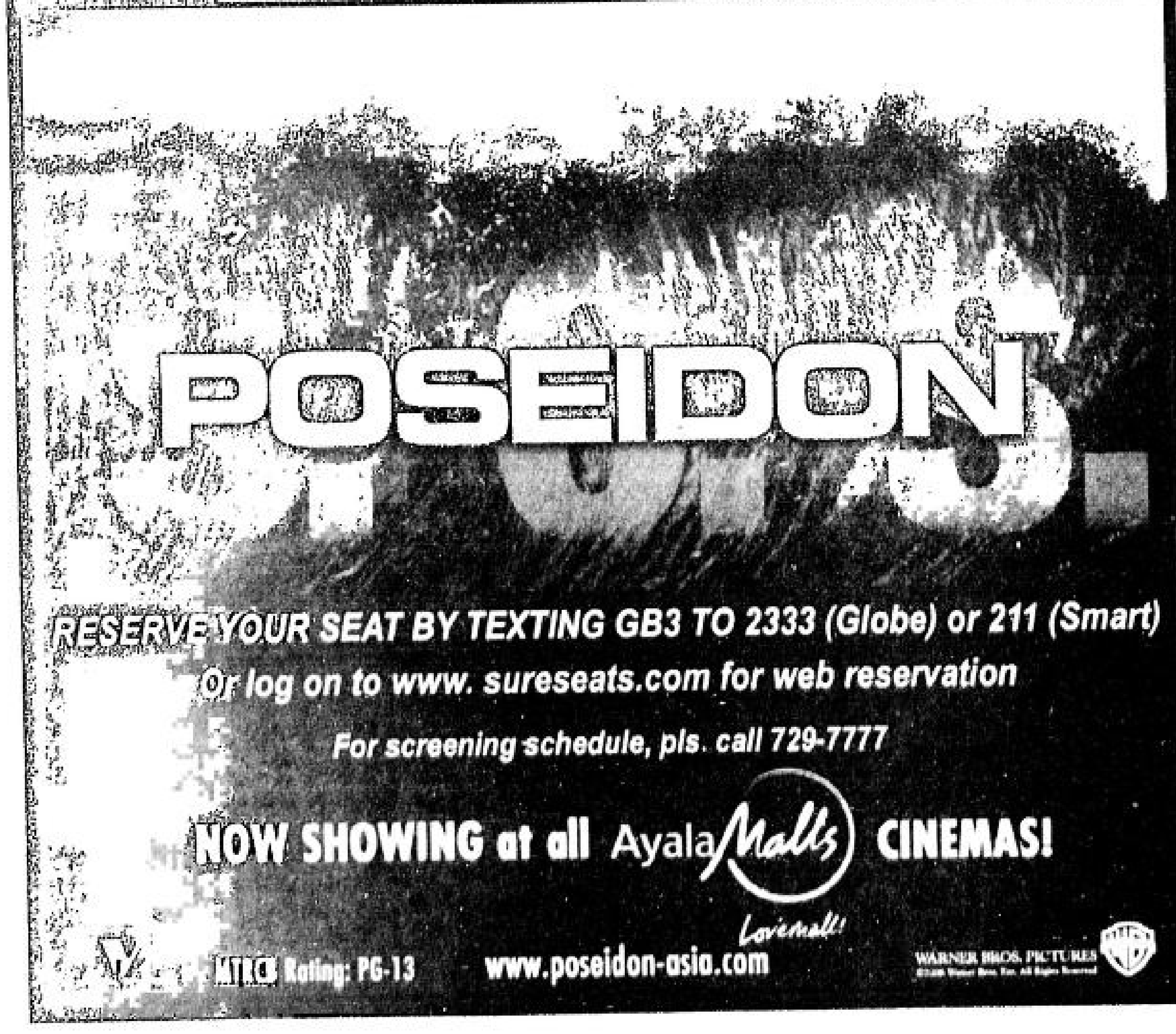

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Triple Emmy winner on HBO

MOS Def and Alan Rickman

THE NEW YORK TIMES SAYS: "'SOMETHING the Lord Made' is supposed to be an uplifting tearjerker about two men who defy racism to accomplish miracles. Fortunately, it's much, much better than that."

Based on a true story in the 1940s, this award-winning movie chronicles the tale of a wealthy white doctor and a poor black laboratory assistant whose unlikely partnership challenged tradition and defied racial boundaries to revolutionize the medical world and become pioneers of cardiac surgery.

Breakthroughs

Emmy and Golden Globe winner Alan Rickman (Professor Snape, "Harry Potter") is a wealthy chief surgeon, Dr. Alfred Blalock, who hires Vivien Thomas (Mos Def, "Monster's Ball")—a bright, young African-American man with big dreams of becoming a doctor—as a laboratory assistant. Thomas' work and medical insights prove priceless to Blalock's practice, and it is soon apparent that Thomas has become more than just a helper. Together, they achieve phenomenal breakthroughs: developing a new process to treat trauma—saving thousands of lives on the frontlines of World War II; and discovering the groundbreaking, miraculous procedure to perform open-heart surgery on "blue babies."

As their work receives international recognition, it is Blalock who has promotions and accolades raining down upon him. Thomas remains unnoticed, unrewarded and preposterously underpaid. Even Blalock, when speaking of their practice, cannot bring himself to publicly credit the assistant who helped him develop his most important procedures, and gave him instructions in the operating room!

For love

Even so, Thomas stays on for the love of the work, knowing that without a medical degree or the opportunity in the field primarily dominated by the white community, he can only achieve his dreams through Blalock.

"Something the Lord Made" is a remarkable tale of a significant chapter in the history of medicine, boldly addressing issues of the treatment of colored people as equals and challenging the limitations of traditional boundaries.

The emotionally-charged performance by Rickman and Def, combined with an outstanding script—written by award-winning duo, Peter Silverman and Robert Caswell—and the assured direction of the highly acclaimed Joseph Sargent ("Warm Springs"), create the winning combination of this winner of three Emmy Awards in 2004 ("Outstanding Made for Television Movie," "Outstanding Cinematography," "Outstanding Single-Camera Picture Editing").

Made by HBO exclusively for HBO, it premieres at 10 tonight on HBO Signature.

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POSEIDON
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REINCARNATION
12:10 / 2:30 / 4:50 / 7:10 / 9:20

APOY SA DIBDIB NG SAMAR
12:50 / 3:0 / 5:10 / 7:20 / 9:30

GLOBE PLATINUM CINEMA

THE WILD
1:00 / 3:00 / 5:00

MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3
12:40 / 2:00 / 3:20 / 4:40 6:00 / 7:20 / 8:40 / 10:00

POSEIDON
1:50 / 4:10 / 6:30 / 8:50

AQUAMARINE
7:15 / 9:30

SILENT HILL
1:40 / 4:20 / 7:00 / 9:40

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ALIMALL CINEMAS

1 POSEIDON
12:10 / 2:15 / 4:20 / 6:25 / 8:30

MISSION IMPOSSIBLE: 3
12:25 / 3:05 / 5:45 / 8:25

AQUAMARINE
12:05 R3 / 1:35 / 3:50 / 6:05 / 8:20

4 APOY SA DIBDIB NG SAMAR
12:00 R2 / 1:50 / 4:00 / 6:10 / 8:20

SLITHER
12:15 / 2:20 / 4:25 / 6:30 / 8:35

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GALLERIA 632-9116

1 POSEIDON • THX
12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00
2 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3
11:00 1:45 4:30 7:15 10:00
3 REINCARNATION
1:10 3:20 5:30 7:40 9:50
4 POSEIDON
11:40 2:00 4:20 6:40 9:00
5 POSEIDON
12:10 2:30 4:50 7:10 9:30
6 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3
12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00
7 AQUAMARINE
12:10 2:35 5:00 7:25 9:50
8 SILENT HILL
2:00 4:40 7:20
9 APOY SA DIBDIB NG SAMAR
1:00 3:15 5:30 7:45 10:00
10 SLITHER
1:00 3:15 5:30 7:45 10:00

ERMITA 536-7809 to 12

1 POSEIDON
11:00 1:10 3:20 5:30 7:40 10:00
2 SLITHER
12:20 2:20 4:20 6:20 8:25 10:00
3 SILENT HILL
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 9:50
4 APOY SA DIBDIB NG SAMAR
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50
5 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 10:00
6 REINCARNATION
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50
7 POSEIDON
12:00 2:10 4:20 6:40 9:00

METRO EAST 682-8193 • 682-8199

1 SLITHER
1:00 3:00 5:00 7:00 9:00
2 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3
11:20 1:50 4:20 6:50 9:15
3 SUBMERGED
1:00 3:00 5:00 7:00 9:00
4 AQUAMARINE
11:25 1:50 4:15 6:40 9:05
5 SILENT HILL
1:00 3:00 5:00 7:00 9:00
6 POSEIDON
12:10 2:10 4:10 6:10 8:10
7 POSEIDON
11:00 1:00 3:00 5:00 7:00 9:10
8 APOY SA DIBDIB NG SAMAR
11:25 1:50 4:15 6:40 9:05

NOVALICHES 935-3231 / 935-3229-30

1 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3
2 POSEIDON
3 SILENT HILL
4 APOY SA DIBDIB NG SAMAR
5 POSEIDON
6 SLITHER

CITISQUARE MALABON 288-2575

1 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3
2 POSEIDON
3 RESERVE
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PIONEER 687-5378

1 POSEIDON
2 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3
3 REINCARNATION
4 SILENT HILL

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2 SHE'S THE MAN
3 APOY SA DIBDIB NG SAMAR
4 POSEIDON

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2 POSEIDON
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1 POSEIDON
2 SUBMERGED
3 APOY SA DIBDIB NG SAMAR
4 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3

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1 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3
2 APOY SA DIBDIB NG SAMAR
3 SILENT HILL
4 POSEIDON

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2 APOY SA DIBDIB NG SAMAR
3 SUBMERGED
4 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3
5 POSEIDON
6 POSEIDON

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1 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3
2 THE WILD
3 POSEIDON
4 SLITHER
5 GRANDMA'S BOY
6 THE LAST HOLIDAY

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1 POSEIDON
2 SLITHER
3 SILENT HILL
4 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3
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6 THE LAST HOLIDAY

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What's it all about, Miriam?

IS THAT…? SURE LOOKS LIKE HER!

Miss Universe 1999 first runner-up Miriam Quiambao in the nude? The photos, are there for the world to see in an on-line exhibit on www.ikestudio.com.

Reader Maria Paz de la Cruz (mariapazdelacruz@hotmail.com) called our attention to the exhibit.

Dela Paz said the photos "are also in the giveaway calendars for Di Vino, a restaurant in Hong Kong owned by [Miriam's] husband Claudio Rondinelli."

QUIAMBAO

RP 'Idol' fast-track screenings today

By Marinel R. Cruz

ONLY 100 CONTESTANTS WILL be picked from over thousands expected to audition for the reality-talent search program "Philippine Idol" starting this week, according to ABC 5.

"We expect a big turn-out, so we want to trim down the numbers as early on as possible," Perci Intalan, network vice president for Creative and Entertainment Production, told INQUIRER.

Intalan said the number of contestants will be whittled down from 100 to 60, then 40, 24, and finally, 12.

Fast-track screenings will be held at satellite offices in SM Malls nationwide today starting at 10 a.m. Applicants will be asked to fill up necessary forms and perform two songs before a set of judges.

Successful applicants will each be given a pass for the audition proper. ABC 5 and its media partners Radio Mindanao Network and Manila Broadcasting Corp. will provide free transportation, food and lodging to those who will pass the provincial tryouts.

For details, interested parties may log on to www.philippineidol.com.

Zsazsa …

From page A2-1

turn serious.

"Even though people keep asking [Dolphy and I when we're getting married], I don't want to feel pressured," she says. "We don't have plans. We believe there was a reason that it didn't push through the last time."

Zsazsa and Dolphy almost tied the knot three years go.

"Right after I got my annulment [from dentist Modesto Tatlonghari], Dolphy and I underwent personal turmoil," she recalls. "I cannot blurt out the reasons; I hope people leave [that part] to us."

More important

What's more important to her at this point, Zsazsa says, is their relationship.

On the work front, the budding comedienne returns to drama. "I play Rosamia, the Crying Diva," she says, on the new ABS-CBN soap opera "Bituing Walang Ningning," which was based on Nerissa Cabral's *komiks* novel.

Zsazsa was tapped to play Lavinia in the 1980s movie version starring Sharon Cuneta. "I couldn't have done that," she muses. "I don't have the powers of Cherie Gil."

Speaking of powers, Carlo Vergara's Zsazsa Zaturnnah was another comic-book character offered to the singer-actress.

"I first heard about that when it was Kris Aquino's project," Zsazsa says. Since Kris wasn't available, "it was offered to Rufa Mae Quinto and then to me. Now I heard it's back to Rufa Mae."

When Regal Films producer Lily Monteverde offered the role to her, Zsazsa primed herself, physically and psychologically, to play the gay superheroine. "I worked out. Circuit training. I wanted to prove I could do the stunts, harness and action scenes."

Alas, it wasn't meant to be. "But if you look at the original comic books, Zsazsa Zaturnnah looks like me," she says. "Big hair, thick brows, pouting lips! She also sang 'Hiram'! There's no denying it."

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1 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3
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1:00, 3:15, 5:30, 7:45, 10:00 LMF

3 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3
MTRCB PG-13
12:00, 2:50, 5:40, 8:30 LMF

4 POSEIDON
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1:35, 4:30, 7:25, 10:30
PG-13

3 POSEIDON
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MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3 PG13 1:45,4:30,7:15,10:00	AQUAMARINE G 2:50,5:10,7:30,9:50	POSEIDON PG13 12:50,3:10,5:30, 7:50,10:10

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PG13

CINEMA 5 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3
11:45, 2:30, 5:10, 7:50, 10:30
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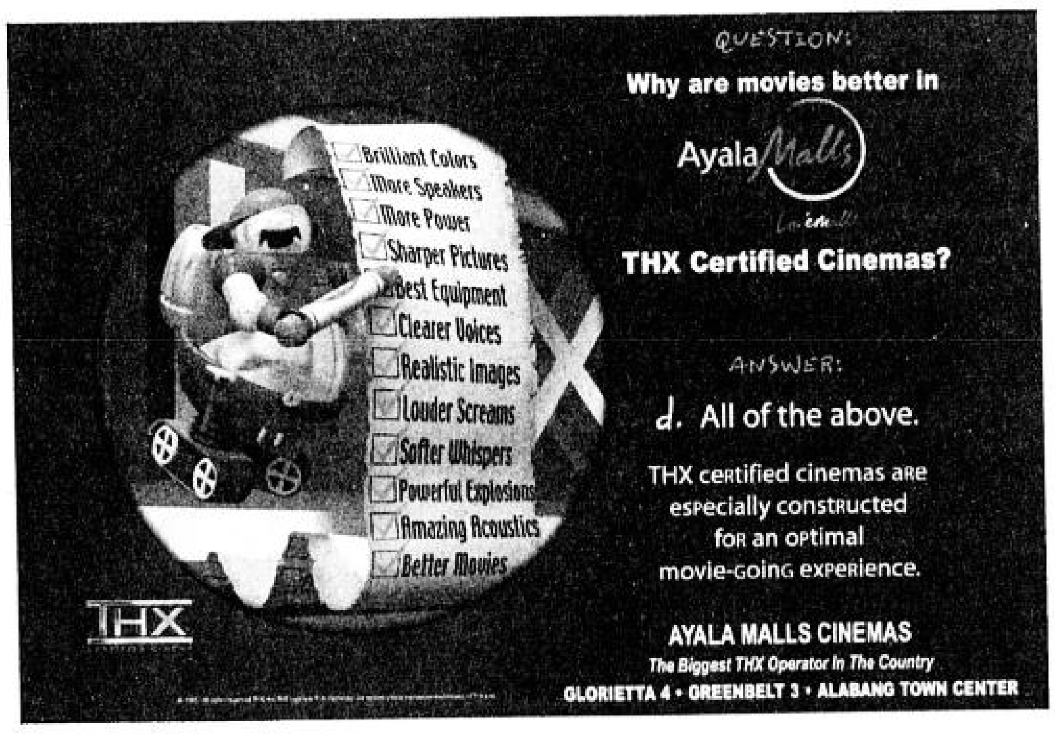
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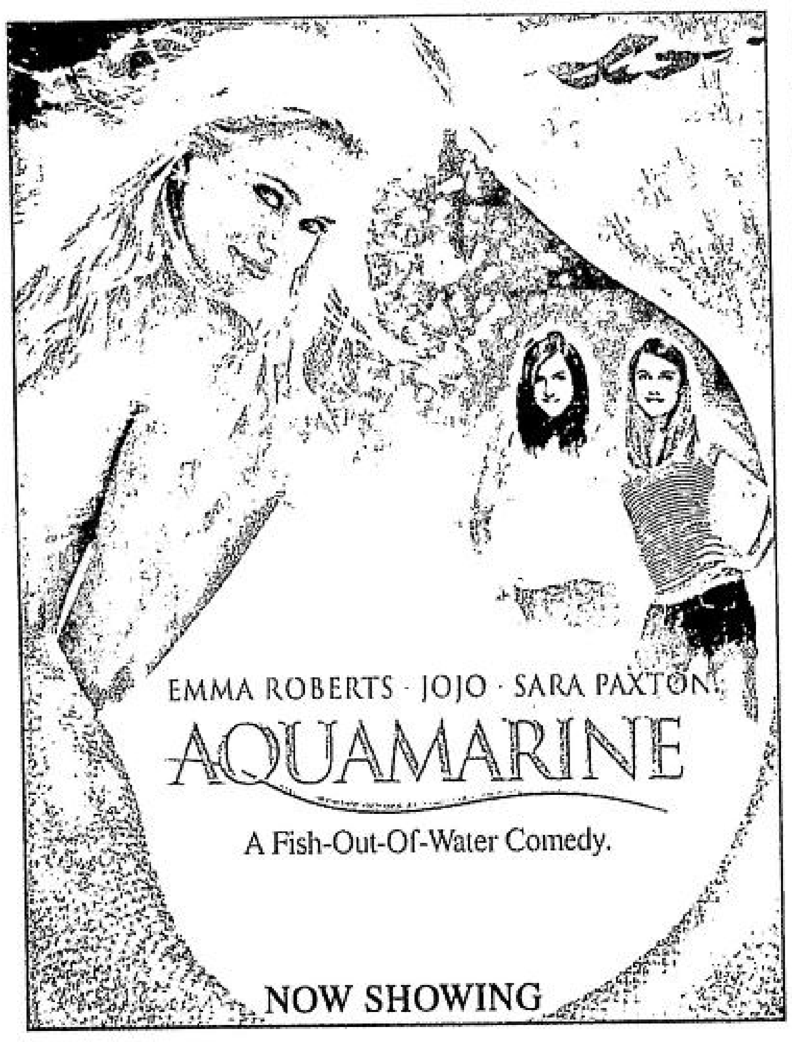
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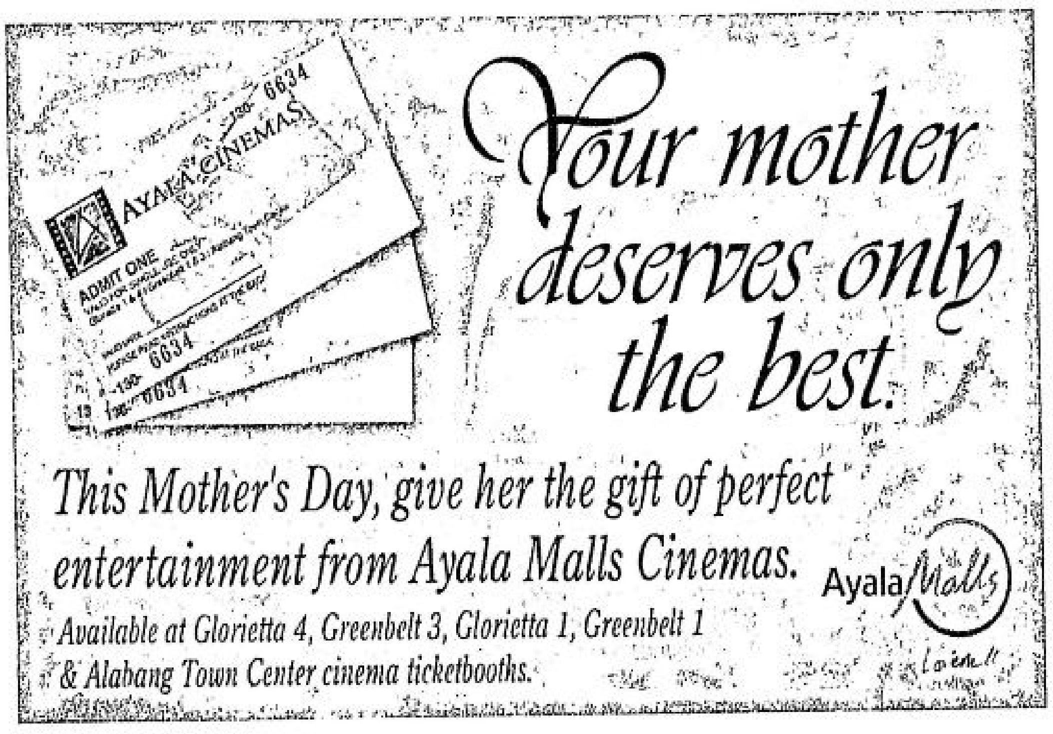
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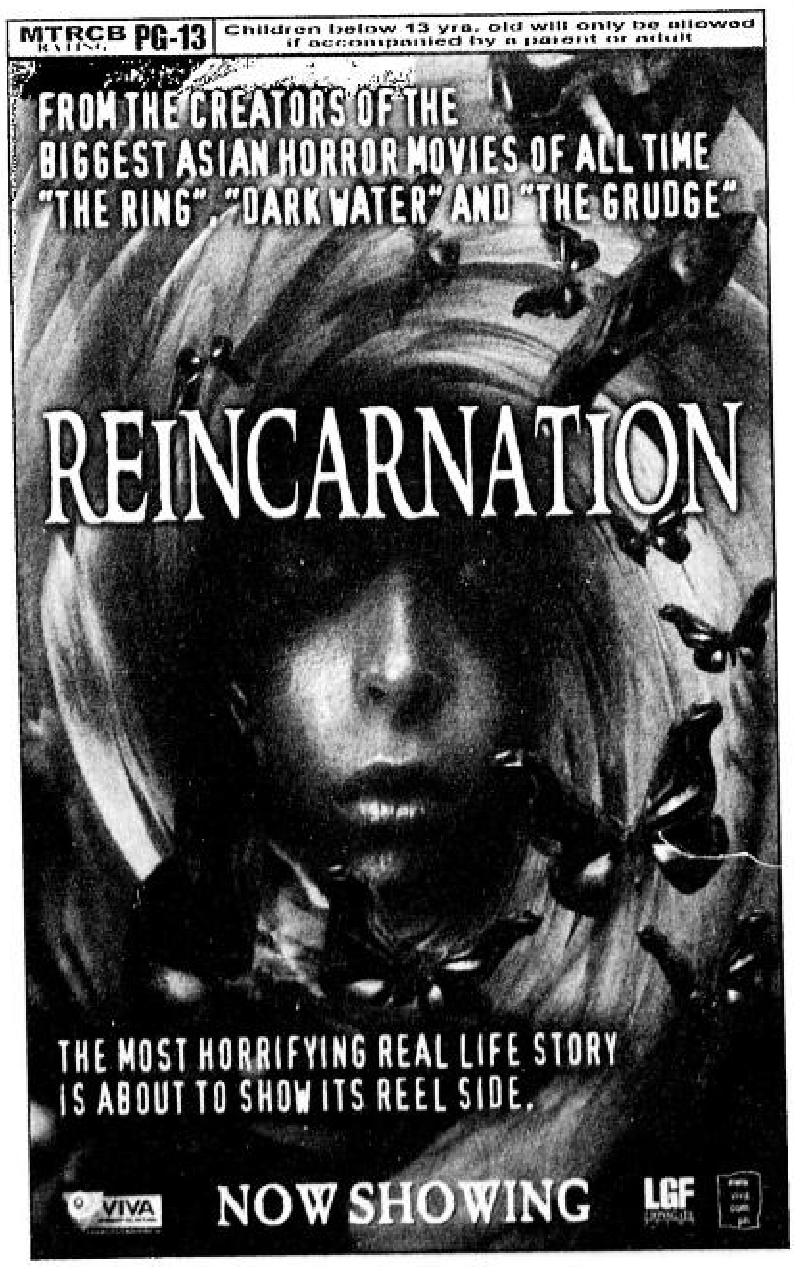
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CHRIS Botti

Heavyweights fail to upstage trumpeter in new hit album

TRUMPETEER CHRIS BOTTI'S LATEST ALbum, "To Love Again," is a collection (of precious old gems) so amazingly conceptualized and produced, that a romantic frame of mind is not even necessary to appreciate it. Each track stands on its own musical merit, no matter the externals that the listener may bring into the experience.

INQUIRER Entertainment told him so in this exclusive e-mail interview. We could almost see him blush.

INQUIRER EXCLUSIVE

"That made my day," he said. "You're constantly trying to... you're always hoping people will like your record. When someone writes something like that—so concise and kinda everything you hope the record would say, it makes me feel all the work [that went into it] was worthwhile. That sounds cliché, but at certain points you're kinda bangin' your head against the wall and [wondering], 'Are people gonna hear this record?' It's hard enough to get people to get actually placed and be present enough to listen. When somebody says this to me that, I feel very, very happy!"

We're the happier for that, actually. Botti is joined here by some heavyweights—Sting ("What Are You Doing the Rest of Your Life?", Michael Buble ("Let There Be Love"), Paul Buchanan ("Are You Lonesome Tonight?", Rosa Passos ("Here's That Rainy Day," Paula Cole ("My One and Only Love"), Gladys Knight ("Lover Man"), Renee Olstead ("Pennies From Heaven"), Steven Tyler ("Smile").

We doubt that all of them can come to Manila together for a show. But Chris Botti will definitely be here in the last quarter of the year for some performances.

"To Love Again" is a brilliant gathering of artists. How did this come about?

We had sort of a big success with the previous CD, "When I Fall In Love." A lot of musicians were anxious to join me in this project, to sing this kind of... beautiful melancholy music. They all knew about it. They knew the arrangers involved.

Who did the "fishing" and convincing?

All the artists on this CD, with the exception of Rosa Passos—whom I do not know but I'm a fan of—I'd previously worked with, and I'm friends with. I just called them up and just basically asked if they wanted to do it and they all said yes.

Your collaboration with Paula Cole was excellent.

What an incredible voice! A lot of people know her through her pop songs; they don't know how great she is, singing in that style.

Who was first to jump in?

It might have been Steven Tyler... [then] Michael Buble, Paula Cole... then I was having dinner with Sting one evening and I told him what the album was kind of shaping up to be. He said, "If you don't ask me to sing on this record, I'll be insulted." So I asked.

What was it like working with Steven Tyler?

We're radically from different genres [but] he's so enthusiastic about music. He was so taken aback when I asked him to do that song in that particular setting with the London Orchestra. He was so into it, man! I knew he'd be good but I didn't know he'd be that good.

What were the guest artists' inputs?

We spent a lot of time tailoring. When you listen to Sting sing "What Are You Doing The Rest Of Your Life?" his voice sounds enormous, gorgeous and wonderful. You want him to sound and feel luxurious inside the music. That's a harder thing to do than you might think. The input really was me flying to wherever they were and sitting with them and saying what key works and let's massage this thing till it is worked out just right, until it feels right.

Only a music artist who is really secure in his skills would have done this the way you did, allowing your guest artists to shine. How did you get to this point of confidence?

The more honest I am about the records I make, interestingly enough, the more successful they become. In "regular" pop, you have an instrumentalist playing all the way through behind the singer and the singer will be singing and hear the trumpet going non-stop the whole time or saxophone or whatever instrument is of choice.

A long time ago, John Coltrane and Johnny Hartman did this record—they just had Johnny Hartman sing and then John Coltrane played solo. And then John Coltrane played solo and Johnny Hartman would sing. It was very simple, understated and wonderful. It was the kind of record that I wanted to put on and listen to at home. That ultimately is the thing. If you listen to Miles Davis' records, he probably plays only 20 or 30 percent of the time, 'cause you're listening to Wayne Shorter, Herbie Hancock and all the other players.

That's my point of view. It's my name on the front but I don't need to be heard through every single measure.

Bituin, drama queen

"THIS IS MY FIRST MAJOR SOLO CONCERT," Bituin Escalante said. "In Bituin... For The First Time" is the show's title.

Asked where she drew emotions from while performing, Bituin declared, unblinking: "I'm a drama queen. If I don't have a problem, I create one."

SHOW TIME

Her featured guest is Mon David, grand prize winner of the recently concluded London International Jazz Competition for Vocalist.

"I got lucky," Bituin said. "Mon David is now a friend."

Her special two-night concert, produced by Thirdline, is set today and tomorrow, 9 p.m., at Onstage, Greenbelt 1, Makati City.

Jaya 'Overjoyed'

Also today and tomorrow, Jaya stars in "Overjoyed," at the Music Museum. The show marks her 10th year in show business.

It is Jaya's first major solo concert in four years.

Call (0917) 897-8357.

Today

Hotdog with **Members** and **Butterflies** at **Suburbia Malate**

"Tipa... Masters of Guitars: **Nyoy Volante**" at **Teatrino Promenade, Greenhills, San Juan**

Hale at Ratsky Malate

True Faith at Ratsky Morato

Kim Flores at Del Rio Resort in Marbel City

K and The Boxers at Ratsky Tomas Morato

Dave at Suburbia

Tomorrow

Bituin Escalante in her first major concert at **Onstage, Greenbelt 1**

The CompanY at **Hyatt Regency Manila's Calesa Bar**

Side A at Starmall La Piñas

"Tipa... Masters of Guitars: **Nyoy Volante**" at **Teatrino Promenade, Greenhills, San Juan**

Winston In Concert featuring **Bamboo** and **Sugarfree** at **Cocomangas Oyster Bar** in Boracay

True Faith at Ratsky Malate

Boy Abunda and **Tin-Tin Bersola** host Surf Mother's Day Concert at the **CCP Grounds** with celebrity moms **Donna Cruz, Yayo Aguila-Martinez, Maricel Morales and Dawn Zulueta**

Kim Flores at South Koronadal Gym in Marbel City

K and The Boxers at **Ratsky Malate**

May 14

Mom's Day Out with **Ruby Rodriguez** at **Metropolis Star Alabang**; 4 p.m.

May 16

K and The Boxers at **Zirkoh Greenhills**

May 17

K and The Boxers at **Klownz Araneta**

Sitti at **Tavern on the Square**, Greenbelt 3

May 18

The CompanY at **Hard Rock Café**

May 19

Troy Montero at Ratsky Malate

K and The Boxers at Ratsky Tomas Morato

Dave at Suburbia

May 20

Winston In Concert featuring **Parokya Ni Edgar**and **Tarcisius** at **Cocomangas Oyster Bar** in Boracay

Kim Flores at the **La Salle Gym** in Bacolod

K and The Boxers at Ratsky Malate

Family Fun Game Show with **Ruby Rodriguez** at **Metropolis Star Alabang**; 4 p.m.

May 21

Ara Mina at Ratsky Morato

Join the Club at **Robinson's Place Dasmariñas**

BITUIN Escalante

May 22

Blue Jean Junkie at **Tavern on the Square**, Greenbelt 3

May 23

K and The Boxers at **Zirkoh Greenhills**

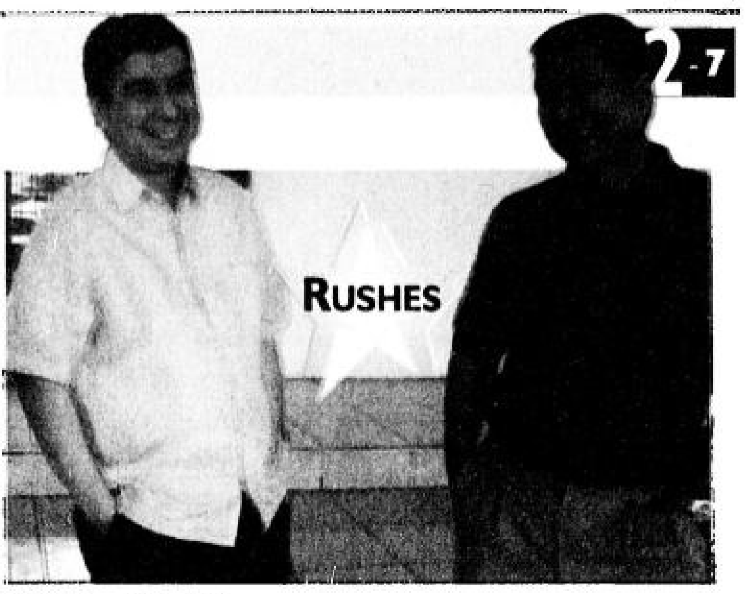
May 24

K and The Boxers at Klownz Araneta

Sitti at **Tavern on the Square**, Greenbelt 3

May 26

Silver: The Songs of Vehnee Saturno at the **Araneta Coliseum** with **Jay-R, Rachelle Ann Go, Mark Bautista, Juris Fernandez** and guests **Ella Mae Saison, The CompanY** and **Martin Nievera**



RAFFY and Mon Tulfo

3 months with Osang

HARD-HITTING POLICE COLUMNIST RAMON TULFO HAS ADmitted he was "with" equally hard-hitting former TV host (and sexy star) Rosanna "Osang" Roces. Osang was supposed to be a host on the new Tulfo show, "Isumbong Mo!" (RPN 9) but the deal fell through.

"*Magagalit kasi ang mga kaibigan ko*," Mon said. He did not elaborate.

As for Raffy ...

MON'S bro, Raffy insists he did not break up the high-profile relationship of Brian Revilla and Maui Taylor. He says he just met her at his birthday party last year, where she was invited as the featured performer. He didn't say she popped out of a cake. No!

Brokeback Keanna

IS KEANNA Reeves the new Dagdag-Bawas Queen? After getting her behind inflated, Keanna is seriously considering deflating her ample breasts.

"Too heavy," she quips. Backbreaking, we suspect.

KEANNA Reeves

Proceed with caution

REAL-LIFE singing sweethearts Rachelle Ann Go and Christian Bautista are being considered for hosts on the revival of "Penthouse Live" on Studio 23. Just a gentle reminder: Martin and Pops were the show's hosts in the 1980s.

BRITNEY Spears

Almost over him

IN NEW York, Nicole Kidman says her divorce from Tom Cruise was a "major shock"—and, she still loves him.

The Associated Press quoted the June issue of Ladies' Home Journal (on newsstands next week) where Nicole says: "To me, he was just Tom, but to everybody else, he is huge. But he was lovely to me. And I loved him. I still love him."

Oops, she did it again

US pop princess Britney Spears is pregnant again, just eight months after giving birth to her first child, her publicist told Agence France Presse on Tuesday. Oops.

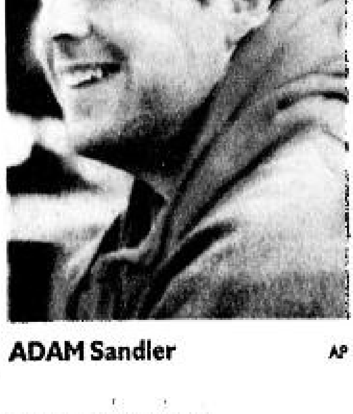
GARNER and Witherspoon with kids in New Orleans. AP

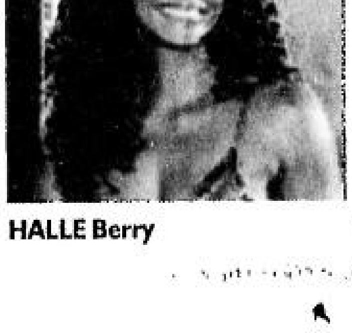
Star visitors

IN A GUTTED building with no interior walls, exposed pipes and no air conditioning to stave off the Louisiana heat, Reese Witherspoon, Jennifer Garner and Cicely Tyson chatted with children who had lost their homes, then watched as they sang, danced and worked on art projects. AP reported that the movie stars were among a delegation of women touring devastated parts of New Orleans to meet with families and children trying to adjust to life after Hurricane Katrina.

Big Daddy

US comedian Adam Sandler, 39, has become a father for the first time after his wife Jackie gave birth at the weekend, his website announced on Monday. "Kid is healthy!! Wife is healthy!! He's still a moron, and that's all that counts!!!," screamed the actor and funnyman's website, without revealing the gender of the new arrival. AFP said People magazine reported that it was a girl.


ADAM Sandler AP


HALLE Berry

Halle & Benicio

OSCAR-WINNING US stars Halle Berry and Benicio Del Toro are to team up to star in a new drama to be made by Danish director Susanne Bier, Daily Variety said Monday.

Tough acts to follow

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

ON MAY 15, THE TV VERSION OF THE HIT film, “Bituing Walang Ningning,” will start telecasting on Channel 2. This early, industry people wonder if the seminal story about the complicated fan-star relationship will turn out to be a thematic, emotional motherlode that can be mined for TV gold as well.

A lot is riding on how viewers will take to the performances of **Sarah Geronimo** in **Sharon Cuneta**’s fan role, and **Angelica dela Cruz** stepping into **Cherie Gil**’s star (and cool-bitch-villain) persona.

Any indications? Well, Sarah has been honed and pushed in different aspects of performance ever since she became a national singing tilt when she was only 14 years young. The results to date, however, have been iffy.

She’s become a formidable singer, but of the *birit* sort. And the damage wreaked on her voice by constant belting has been noticeable for all to hear.

As an actress, Sarah’s work had been even less rewarding. We get the feeling that she’s *hinog sa pilit*, forced by her handlers to do too many things too soon. So her past performances have generally been earnest *but* two dimensional and lacking in thespic warmth and insight.

SARAH Geronimo

So, how Sarah will fare as an actress in her first major TV soap is still a questionable proposition, to be definitively resolved only when the series starts airing on May 15.

We *hope* that the TV soap’s directors have ben able to effect a key change in Sarah’s attitude and practice regarding thespic performance.

After all, the role of Dorina in “Bituing Walang Ningning” was a pop triumph for Sharon, who’s a formidable and truly tough act to follow.

As for Angelica dela Cruz stepping into Cherie Gil’s “deadly” stiletto shoes, that’s an even more daunting challenge, since it was Cherie’s bitchy character, Lavinia, who intoned the film’s “signature” line (“You’re nothing but a second-rate, trying-hard copycat”), among other bravura highlights.

Happily, it looks like Angelica is better prepared for the challenging task at hand, partly because she’s more experienced, and also because she’s an assertive performer in her own right.

In other words, she has what i takes to play a stellar bitch—and, even better, her *own* kind of bitch, not a Cherie Gil impersonator.

Additional stellar acts to watch out for are **Zsa Zsa Padilla**’s portrayal of Sarah’s birth mother, and **Ai Ai delas Alas** as her adoptive mom.

The Sarah, Angelica, Zsa Zsa and Ai Ai quartet is a potentially powerhouse team, one that could propel Channel 2’s “Bituing Walang Ningning” to yummy melodramatic heights.

But the proof of the pudding is in the eating, and a lot can go wrong with puddings, especially on TV, so let’s hope that Channel 2’s new soap will survive its birthing pains and prove to be a success for everyone concerned.

Anak TV screening

SUPPORTERS of child-sensitive television have banded together to stage a whole-day congress on May 13 at Pilgrim Christian College honoring mothers of Cagayan de Oro City. Spearheaded by Southern. Broadcasting Network’s Supermom’s Club and the Southeast Asian Foundation for Children and Television, an Anak TV screening will also be staged at United Christian Church.

The first Talamdong Inahan (Bukod-Tanging Ina) awards will also be bestowed on 10 Cagayan de Oro mothers. **Boots Anson Roa** is keynote speaker, while Anak TV’s **Edgardo Roces** and **Mag Cruz Hatol** will underscore the urgency of the prudent use of television.

Livelihood sessions by Splash Corp., greeting card giveaways from Hallmark, snacks from Goldilocks, samplings from URC and Chocquick, candies from Columbia’s, and premium prizes from PLDT, Panasonic and HBC await participants. Cebu Pacific and Negros Navigation are the events’ official carriers, while the new Koresko hotel in Pueblo del Oro and Maxandria is the official residence.

‘Garfield 2’

COMEDY star **Bill Murray** voices the world’s best-loved fat cat in “Garfield 2: A tale of Two Kitties.” Murray plays Garfield with such zest and flourish that he comes off as the tabby cat personified, as he whisks gloriously sassy bombast throughout the fun-filled animated sequel.

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REAL HORROR STORY
“AN AMERICAN HAUNTING”
TAKES A SOLID BOW IN 3RD PLACE

In a counter-programming strategy that worked, Freestyle Releasing's true horror story "An American Haunting", took the 3rd spot in the US Box office last weekend. The horror film was in the fewest theaters and yet had the highest per-theater average -- after "M:I:3" -- of the session's top 12 films this weekend. Donald Sutherland and Sissy Spacek star in the film, which was helmed and written by Courtney Solomon.

POSSESSION KNOWS NO BOUNDS: Rachel Hurd-Wood stars as Betsy Bell, the young girl tormented by the demonic spirit in "An American Haunting"

American Haunting is based on the true story of a real demonic possession that caused the death of a person. The incident was witnessed and documented by hundreds of people (among them was the 7th President of the United States Andrew Jackson). This true story represents one of the most famous instances of demonic possession in American history. *CT* ADVT.

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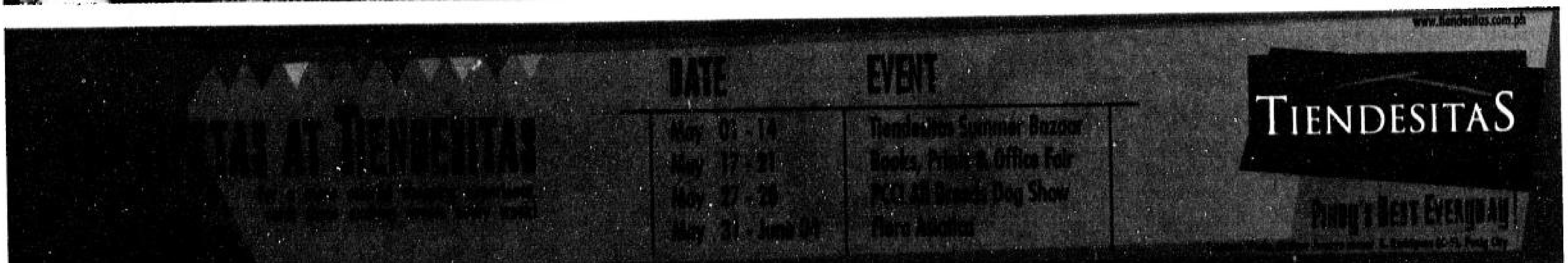
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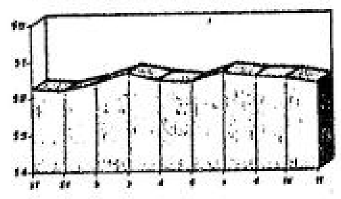

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GOLD: $708.20-708.70
per ounce Hong Kong, May 11, 2006

Shares close 0.84% higher

SHARE PRICES YESTERDAY CLOSED 0.84 percent higher on strong interest in mining stocks after metals rose to fresh records in US trade overnight, dealers said.

A fresh wave of buying in blue chips also lifted the market as foreign funds continued to pour in, dealers said.

The composite index closed up 21.30

SHARES/ B2

Country ranks 49th in poll of 61 nations; weak governance cited

By Michelle V. Remo

THE PHILIPPINES RANKED 49th out of the 61 countries rated in terms of global competitiveness in 2005, maintaining the same poor position it occupied in 2004.

The country rated weakly in the areas of education, good governance, investment climate, and health, according to the 2006 World Competitiveness Yearbook published by the Switzerland-based Institute for Management Development (IMD).

The results of the World Competitiveness Survey was presented yesterday at the Asian Institute of Management (AIM) in Makati City.

"Our assessment is that [the country's] problems have been recurring year in and year out," said Mia Denopol, project manager for the Global Competitiveness program.

Denopol noted that the areas where the country had rated poorly had not changed. She cited the problem of poor

RP RATES/ B2

STATE OF THE ART
President Macapagal-Arroyo views the state-of-the-art facilities of Saudi Arabian Oil Co. during her visit to Saudi Aramco's headquarters in Dahran, Saudi Arabia. Saudi Aramco is owned by the Saudi government. With her is the oil firm's president and chief executive officer Abdallah Jum'ah (second from left).
OPS-NIB PHOTO

Mirant's RP subsidiary sells 50% stake in power plant operator

By Abigail L. Ho

ATLANTA-BASED MIRANT CORP. HAS sold the 50-percent stake of its Philippine subsidiary in power firm Mirant Global Philippines Corp.

In a statement, First Metro Investment Corp. president Francisco Sebastian said the company arranged for the sale of Mirant Philippines Corp.'s Mirant Global stake to a group of investors led by Global Business Holdings Inc.

Global Business Holdings, a member of the Metrobank group, is Mirant's joint venture partner for Mirant Global.

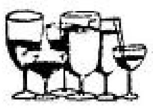
Mirant's parent firm in Atlanta said that the sale of its 50-percent stake in Mirant Global was "consistent with its strategy of focusing on assets of substantial scale."

The Mirant Global joint venture was formed in 2003 to help address the growing power demand of the Visayas region.

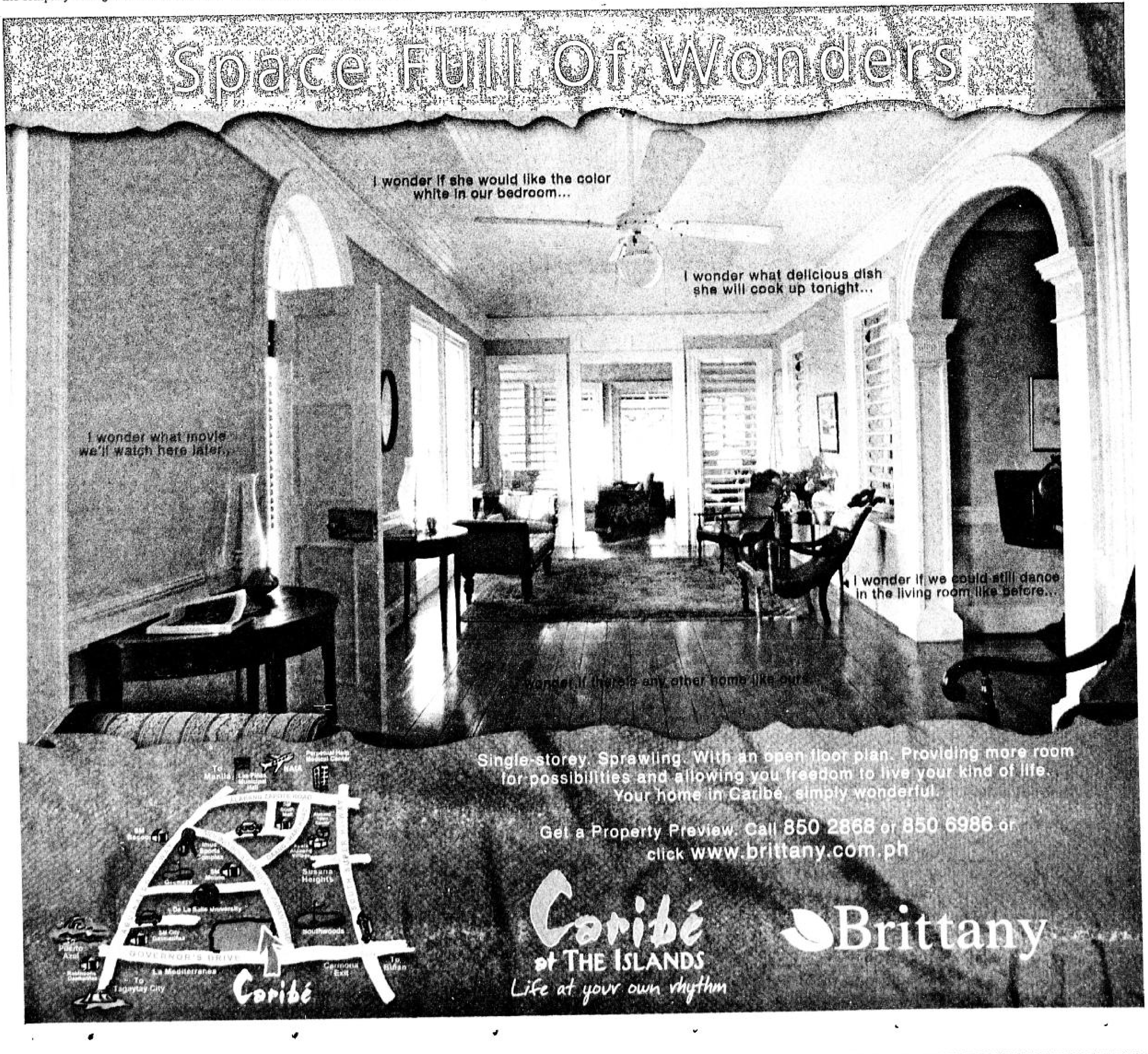
Mirant Global operates the 121-megawatt (MW) Toledo facility in Cebu. The joint venture also expanded the capacity of its Panay plant by 40 MW, as well as put up a 7.5-MW diesel-fired plant in Nabas, Aklan and another 5-MW diesel facility in New Washington town, also in Aklan.

The plants represent less than 5 percent of Mirant's total capacity in the Philippines, which now stands at around 2,200 MW.

WHAT'S INSIDE



Merry Christmas, brokers /B3
Gov't puts on roro roadshow to drum up finances /B2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Gov't puts on roro roadshow to drum up finances

DBP opens P12-B loan facility for development of roro ports

By Michelle V. Remo

THE GOVERNMENT HAS stepped up efforts to complete the Road RoRo (roll-on, roll-off) Terminal Systems project by putting on a nationwide roadshow, together with private sector partners, to drum up investments for the project.

Already, the Development Bank of the Philippines has opened a P12-billion loan facility that can be accessed by local government units and private entities interested in investing in roro ports development.

The government road show will also complement the recent move of the National Development Co. to set up the Maritime Equity Corp. of the Philippines (MECP), whose mandate is to acquire roro vessels for lease to private-sector investors.

The transport and logistics committee of the Export Development Council (EDC), a government-private sector partnership tasked with recommending policies programs to boost exports, will conduct the roadshows starting next month.

Enrico Basilio, economics professor at the University of Asia and the Pacific (UA&P) who does research work related to the roro project, said the roadshow would initially cover the provinces of Quezon, Surigao and La Union.

"The benefits of developing roro ports are obvious," Basilio said in a press briefing at the UA&P yesterday. "It enhances regional trade, boosts tourism, and serves as a catalyst for area development."

Basilio said that, so far, there have been 15 roro connections established under the nationwide roro project. This means 34 more connections are needed to complete the 49 connections targeted under the project.

What have been completed so far, he said, are the eastern and western loops of the project.

To complete the nationwide roro project, the government has to establish connections in the central loop, which would cover the provinces of Masbate, Cebu, Bohol, Camiguin and Misamis Oriental, he added.

The estimated cost of developing a roro port is P30 million, and a roro connection, which involves two ports, may cost P60 million, Basilio said. A roro shipping vessel is estimated to each cost P100 million.

The economist said that low-earning local government units might not be able to afford the establishment of a roro port. For this reason, Basilio said, LGUs are encouraged to look for potential partners from the private sector.

While the local government can provide land area, private sector may infuse the funds needed to develop and operate the roro ports.

COMMENTARY

Palarong Pambansa and international trade

By Ernesto M. Ordoñez

LAST MAY 7, FORMER ATHLETE and current Sen. Francisco Pangilinan told the crowd at the 2006 Palarong Pambansa opening in Naga City that sports is not just about winning games, but more importantly, about developing character.

From this perspective, much from Palarong Pambansa may be applied to our international trade.

Palarong Pambansa

Two days after the senator addressed the crowd, it was reported over the radio that some teams were accused of cheating for fielding over-aged participants in certain age categories. One such incident was reported by a coach who found out that a 17-year-old was competing in the 13-year-old category. That player's team won, but at the expense of the higher value of character development.

If such unfair practices are not corrected, we may again suffer the international embarrassment we experienced when a team from the Philippines was caught violating the age limit rule several years ago. We unfairly won the world championship in Little League baseball.

International trade

A similar situation happened—and will likely happen again unless we stop it—in the World Trade Organization (WTO). Obviously, developed nations are far more powerful than developing nations like ours. We therefore applaud the WTO when it inserted in its agreements the "Special and Differential Treatment (SND)" provision for developing nations.

But while SND is implemented in some areas, it is ignored in many others. Worse, commitments by developed countries to level the playing field remain vague and unfulfilled. An example is that developed countries have still not decreased their huge subsidies as an accompanying measure for developing countries' rapid tariff reductions.

SND most of the time is more rhetoric than reality.

To correct this situation, the developing nations must band together in the current WTO negotiations, also known as the Doha, or development.

Power of unity

For the WTO's Agreement of Agriculture (AOA), 33 developing nations formed an alliance in July 2003 to protect their important agricultural products from rapid liberalization.

At the sixth WTO ministerial meeting held in Hong Kong in December 2005, the delegates succeeded in inserting the provisions for "Special Products (SP) and Special Safeguard Measures (SSM)" for developing countries in the agreement reached during the WTO meeting. This is because the developing nations had the power of a united bloc, with Agriculture Secretary Domingo Panganiban and Undersecretray Godfredo Serrano, assuming lead roles.

The specific modalities and schedules for the two provisions are now being negotiated in Geneva. Rep. Erin Tañada is a major advocate of these provisions. Others are Jessica Reyes-Cantos, Rice Watch and Action Network (R1) head, Riza Bernabe of Centro Saka, and the group Alyansa Agrikultura (telefax number 024265626), which came out with a paper on the subject entitled, "Seizing the Opportunity: Special Products and Special Safeguards Mechanisms."

Their positions will serve as a good guide for our negotiators.

Market access

For WTO's Non-Agricultural Market Access Agreement (Nama), which includes industrial products and fisheries, the unity of developing nations to push for SND came too late.

The Nama 11 (composed of 11 developing nations) was organized only last December 2005), the very same month the WTO Ministerial Meeting was held. Thus, they did not succeed in modifying the Swiss formula for the agricultural sector (a mechanism for rapid tariff liberalization), which the G 33 successfully rejected.

The Alyansa Agrikultura, which represents the fishery sector in Nama, along with the four umbrella organizations of the Fair Trade Alliance—the Federation of Philippine Industries, the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Philippine Exporters' Foundation—defined the country's Nama position.

The groups are advocating an exemption of 10 percent of tariff lines from WTO maximum bound rates, a much higher coefficient than the 25 percent of the Swiss Formula that will slow down the liberalization pace. The groups also want a formula adjustment that will give us credit for the unilateral liberalization we undertook.

Credit should go to DTI Secretary Peter Favila and Undersecretary Tomas Aquino for supporting this effort. Favila was the first Cabinet official to institutionalize private sector participation in the WTO. Aquino is currently working on the Nama negotiations.

Conclusion

The Palarong Pambansa is the training ground for our young to strive for excellence while developing moral values. These includes integrity and fair play. We are confident that the Department of Education will correct any unfairness during the Palaro so that our youth will be equipped with the right skills, discipline and values when they later assume leadership roles in fields such as international trade.

Our current DA and DTI officials should likewise continue to battle unfairness in WTO. This way, SND and the development thrust in the Doha Round will become more reality than rhetoric. The private sector must now unite and fully support DA and DTI so that we will win in this important game.

(The author is Agriwatch chair; former Cabinet secretary for presidential flagship programs and projects, and former undersecretary of agriculture and trade and industry. For inquiries and suggestions, email agriwatchphil@yahoo.com or telefax 02-8516635.)

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Shares close 0.84% higher

From page B1

points at 2,550.79 after trading between 2,529.49 and 2,553.99. Volume was 6.5 billion shares worth P3.2 billion ($62.7 million).

The broader all-shares index advanced 19.05 points to 1,576.

Gainers led losers 92 to 27, with 33 stocks unchanged.

Among miners, Philex Mining Corp A, limited to Filipinos, gained 50 centavos to P5.30. Philex B, which foreign investors can buy, advanced 55 centavos to P5.30. Semirara Mining Corp. gained 50 centavos to P30.50. *AFP*

RP rates poorly ...

From page B1

infrastructure that placed the country outside the radar screen of foreign investors.

According to Dennis Legaspi, associate director of the AIM Policy Center, IMD's partner in the dissemination of the World Competitiveness Survey, some of the areas where the Philippines rated poorly included pupil-teacher ratio, where the country landed on the last spot at 61.

Other areas where the country ranked low were on expenditure on education (60th), expenditure on health (60th), expenditure on research and development (60th), country's credit rating (57th), country image abroad (57th), risk of political instability (60th), bribery and corruption (60th), brain drain (58th), and independence of public service from political interference (59th).

The report also cited the improved ranking of other countries in the Asia Pacific region.

Legaspi said China moved up from 31st place in 2004 to 19th last year, while India improved from 39th place to 29th. Malaysia likewise improved, moving from 28th spot to 23rd.

Neighboring Hong Kong and Singapore performed strongly, ranking second and third, following the United States, which ranked 1st in the scale last year.

But Legaspi said there were areas where the Philippines ranked strongly. These areas include cost of living index, where the country ranked the first. The Philippines also got the highest rank in terms of percentage of high-technology exports as a percentage of manufactured goods.

Other areas where the Philippines performed strongly were in real short-term interest rate (2nd), consumption tax rate (6th), collected tax revenues as percentage of gross domestic product (7th), compensation levels (4th), working hours (5th).

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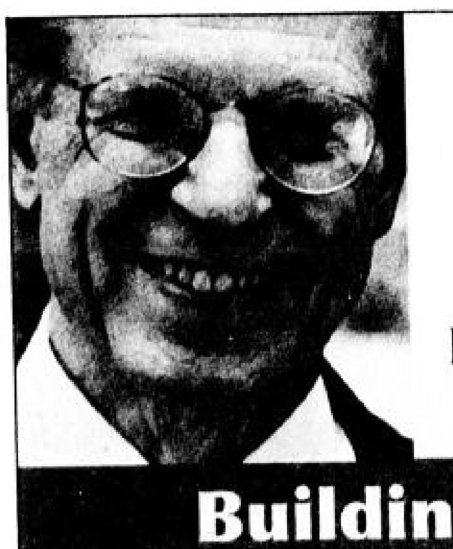
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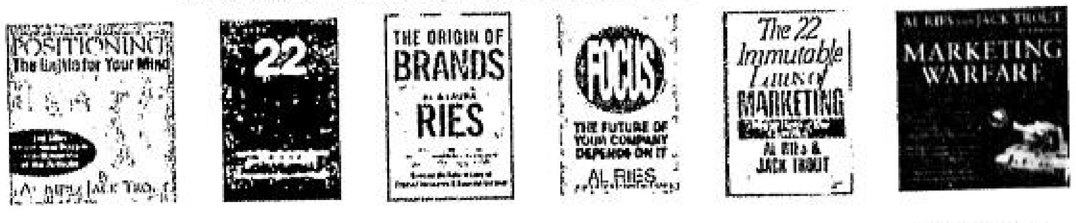
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Merry Christmas, brokers

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

IT IS ONLY MAY, BUT AT THE RATE A NUMBER of stock brokers have been snapping up luxury cars, you would think it is Christmas-time again.

According to the grapevine, Audi, whose authorized importer-distributor is stockbroker Robert Coyiuto Jr., has sold more than two dozen units since the onset of the bull market to an equal number of stock market brokers and players.

The Audis range from the entry-level A4s to the limo-like A8s like the daily driver—this we saw with our very own eyes—of international container terminal king Enrique Razon Jr.

The good fortune has also spilled over to the real estate market. For instance, stock market player/developer Benjamin Bitanga, who not long ago sold his Dasmariñas Village house to importer Lucio Co to help pare down Asian currency crisis debts, has imported no less than a brand-new Aston Martin DB9 (list price, depending on specs: from $155,000 to $172,350) to toast his reviving fortunes.

Over at the red-hot mining sector, an indication that Benguet Corp. has gotten out of its decade-long debt rut is that its president/CEO, Benjamin Philip Romualdez, is now scooting around town in a black BMW 7 limo, no less.

His gregarious brother, Equitable PCIBank vice chair Ferdinand Martin Romualdez, has in the meantime not lost hope that his fellow car aficionado, Manila Golf king. maker Macario Te, will finally overcome personal undercurrents and join him in getting their hands on those Le Mans winner Audi diesels.

Te buying from Coyiuto? Now, that's really spreading good tidings and good cheer.

Metrobank sexed up

THE STAID Metrobank is finally spicing up its stock market standing by agreeing to release more than 203 million more shares, raising the current outstanding shares of 1.63 billion shares by about 12.4 percent.

The improved liquidity, which it is hoped, would translate to improved share pricing, marks the ascension of the eldest son of taipan George Ty, the 40-year-old Arthur, as president of the country's largest bank.

Details of the secondary offering are still being worked out, but the Ty plan follows similar paths taken by the listed companies of taipans John Gokongwei and Henry Sy—give the market more shares, and the market rewards you with even greater market valuation to more than compensate for the reduced family holding.

Along with the assumption of the young Ty, Metrobank also announced the appointments of Joshua Naing and Carmelita Araneta as executive vice president, and the promotion of seven others as senior VPs.

Money-go-round

- FORMER Rep. Egmidio Tanjuatco Jr. may find it difficult to get himself appointed as a Comelec commissioner or to any other government position given that Bank of Commerce, controlled by his relative Antonio Cojuangco Jr., is still suing him for an unspecified sum of money at the Makati Regional Trial Court.
- The work- and deal-swamped SM heiress Teresita Sy is giving up her board seat at PLDT, with her independent directorship to be taken up by Metrobank heir, Federal Land

COCKTALES/ B4

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Bond Fund - US Dollar	1.2552	1.2509

* Note These investments of variable life insurance contracts are not mutual funds. Life insurance products are regulated by the Insurance Commission.

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Metrobank plans expansion

Bank builds capital, looks for possible acquisitions

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE COUNTRY'S BIGGEST LENDER Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co. is back in expansion mode, beefing up its core capital base and hunting for potential acquisitions for the first time this decade.

Under the leadership of its new president, Taipan George Ty's son Arthur, the bank is now raising up to P9 billion through the issuance of new shares and the unloading of about P15 billion worth of bad assets.

After completing the sale of $125 million worth of perpetual bonds eligible as hybrid tier 1 capital, Metrobank's board approved Wednesday night the issuance of up to 203.6 million in new shares from its authorized but unissued capital stock through a domestic and international equity placement.

Analysts said that based on current market prices, the new issuance could raise P8.5 to P9 billion.

Metrobank's status as the country's biggest bank is being challenged by smaller but more aggressive rivals such as Bank of the Philippine Islands, Banco de Oro Universal bank and Union Bank of the Philippines.

There were talks in the banking sector that Metrobank had recently offered to buy International Exchange Bank, but this was denied by the new Metrobank president. I-bank's controlling shareholders recently agreed to sell out to UnionBank.

Metrobank widened its lead over its peers earlier with the acquisition of Solid Banking Corp. in 2000 and its consolidation with Metrobank subsidiary Global Business Bank in 2002.

Bad assets inherited from previous acquisitions prompted Metrobank to slow down in previous years, but bank officials said the 'digestion period' was over and the bank was ready to look for more expansion opportunities.

During the stockholders meeting, Metrobank amended its charter to scrap the preemptive rights of existing shareholders during capital-raising activities, aiming to increase the bank's free float and encourage the entry of more investors.

In a statement yesterday, Metrobank said that in line with the planned capital call, "certain shareholders may decide to sell secondary shares as part of the offering."

Metrobank said it would use the net proceeds from the issue to further strengthen its capital adequacy ratio in response to recent adjustments following its adoption of International Accounting Standards and in anticipation of Basel II requirements which will be effective in 2007.

PHILIPPINE Long Distance Telephone Co. president Napoleon Nazareno and chair Manuel Pangilinan address a press conference at the company's headquarters in Manila. An appreciating local currency resulted in PLDT posting a 7-percent drop in Q1 profit to P8.58 billion. AFP

SMIC posts ₱2.9B in profit

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

SM INVESTMENTS CORP., THE FLAGSHIP company of taipan Henry Sy, said it had registered a net income of P2.9 billion from January to March this year due to one-time gains from the sale of global shares.

The amount, it said, was 126 percent higher than the P1.3 billion posted in April to June last year, the first quarter of its fiscal year 2006 ending March. The company, however, has shifted to the regular calendar year starting this year.

Including minority interests and income generated from subsidiaries, total net income stood at P3.77 billion or 83 percent higher than last year's P2.06 billion, SMIC said in a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange.

SMIC booked an extraordinary income of P1.3 billion from the sale of global depository receipts representing Banco de Oro shares.

Income without the one-time gain would have stood at P1.6 billion in the first quarter, up 23 percent from P1.3 billion in the same period last year.

Strong sales from SMIC's retail business pushed consolidated revenue up 10.8 percent to P12.3 billion in the first quarter of 2006 from the previous year's P11 billion.

The retail group, with its network of 26 SM Department Stores, accounted for 67 percent of total revenue.

Retail sales grew 7.7 percent to P8.2 billion in 2006 from the P7.6 billion last year due to the opening of two new department stores in SM City San Lazaro and SM Sucat Annex in the second half of 2005 and an additional department store in SM City Sta. Rosa in the first quarter of 2006.

The strong performance of other subsidiaries also contributed significantly to SMIC's net income. Rental revenue from its shopping mall subsidiary, SM Prime Holdings, Inc., accounted for 19 percent of the total. While those from SM Prime's 23 shopping malls rose 15 percent to P 2.4 billion in the first three months of the year from last year's P2 billion. The company's healthy balance sheet and strong financial performance allowed it to declare cash dividend of 47 percent or P4.70 per share.

SMDC raises stake in Belle

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

SM DEVELOPMENT CORP., THE RESIDENTIAL developer of the SM Group, has increased its stake in Belle Corp. to 8.78 percent, the company said in a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE).

SMDC said it had acquired additional 8.37 million shares of Belle , bringing its total holdings in the Tagaytay leisure homes developer to 557.89 million.

Yesterday, Belle closed at P1.42 apiece.

SMDC's move to increase its stake coincides with Belle's robust performance in the first quarter.

Belle yesterday said its consolidated net income in the first quarter surged 163 percent to P69.7 million, an increase of P43.2 million from P26.5 million in the first quarter of 2005.

Net revenues from operating sources grew 73 percent to P165.5 million, from P95.7 million in the same quarter in 2005, mainly due to higher revenues from real estate sales.

The company completed the first three phases (The Sanctuary, The Ridge and The Meadows) of its farm lots project, Plantation Hills at the Greenlands in Tagaytay in 2005. The two newest phases of Plantation Hills—The Heights and The Ranch—are 76 percent and 34 percent completed, as of March 31.

PHC trading suspension lifted

THE PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE yesterday lifted the trading suspension on Philcomsat Holdings Corp. shares.

The decision was made after the Securities and Exchange Commission approved the company's amended articles of incorporation that allowed the extension of its corporate life by another 50 years.

Trading of PHC shares was suspended Wednesday by the exchange pending the approval of the extension of the company's corporate life. *Elizabeth L. Sanchez*

Ginebra Q1 earnings lower

GINEBRA SAN MIGUEL INC., THE HARD liquor arm of San Miguel Corp., reported weaker first quarter net earnings of P228 million, 38 percent lower than the P367.9 million booked in the same quarter last year.

GSMI chair Eduardo Cojuangco said GSMI had to absorb the additional cost arising from the higher expanded value added tax (VAT) rate and the 60-percent hike in the price of molasses, a basic raw material. These pared down operating income to P445 million in during the quarter.

"We are confident that our business will pick up in the coming months, especially as the gap between current and year-ago consumption of gin has substantially narrowed down," Cojuangco said.

To fuel future growth,GSMI with its joint venture partner, C.N.T Wine and Liquor Company Ltd. in Thailand, will start operating a P2-billion distillery and bottling plant by June next year. This will allow GSMI to produce "lao khao," a popular Thai liquor and other spirits.

GSMI owns 40 percent in CNT Wine and Liquor Co. Ltd.

Cojuangco said 2005 was a "watershed year," marked by increased costs and soft consumer demand. GSMI said last year its net income sank to P368 million, from P1.72 billion in 2004. *Elizabeth L. Sanchez*

'Hot money' inflow hit $101M in April

FOREIGN INVESTMENTS IN LOCAL EQUITIES and debt papers, tagged as "hot money," posted a net inflow of $101.2 million in April, less than half the $279.8 million in the same period last year, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas reported yesterday.

For the first four months of the year, there was a net foreign portfolio inflow of $590.9 million, much smaller than the $1.72 billion recorded a year ago.

The April inflow was 10 percent higher than the $91.9 million posted in March.

"This development indicates positive investor sentiment following the strong performance of mining shares and the favorable reports on the first quarter budget deficit, overseas Filipino workers remittances and exports in February and the March inflation rate," BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said.

Despite the upbeat sentiment on local stocks, gross investments in government securities were lower due to the narrowing differentials between domestic and foreign interest rates as well as the smaller volume of new government issuances given lower-than-expected budget deficits. *Doris C. Dumlao*

Aboitiz Equity profit hits ₱650M

ABOITIZ EQUITY VENTURES (AEV) HAS REported a net income of P650 million in the first quarter, up 5 percent from year-ago level.

Earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization (Ebitda) hit P1.3 billion.

AEV's power group posted the largest income contribution of P456 million. This was, however, 10 percent lower than last year's level.

In spite of weak volume growth, the power distribution sector posted a 10 percent increase in income during the period. The power generation concern's contribution, however, dropped by 33 percent due to lower contribution from the hydro group.

Passenger and cargo mover Aboitiz Transport Group (ATS) reported a net loss of P192.4 million in the first quarter, bigger than last year's P167.2 million, due to weak sales brought about by its sluggish international charter business and low passenger and cargo volumes.

It said consolidated revenue in the first three months reached P2.5 billion, 12 percent lower than year-ago. *Elizabeth L. Sanchez and Daxim Lucas*

Banco de Oro nets ₱706.5M

BANCO DE ORO UNIVERSAL BANK REPORTED a 25-percent increase in its first quarter profit to P706.5 million from year-ago level.

BDO saw a 12-percent increase in net interest income to P1.8 billion over a year ago, while fee-based earnings jumped by 51 percent to P1.2 billion.

The increase in net interest income was attributed to a 16-percent expansion in balance sheet.

Non-interest income was bolstered by higher securities trading and strong service fees derived from trust, loan underwriting, cash management and insurance services.

Operating expenses amounted to P2 billion, up by 44 percent from last year.

The bank set aside P181.4 million for impairment losses on loans, investments and other assets. The nonperforming loan ratio of 4.4 percent was among the best in the industry while loan coverage ratio stood at 102 percent of NPLs.

Total resources as of the first quarter stood at P237.5 billion. *Doris C. Dumlao*

Cocktales

From page B3

president Alfred Ty.

Heard through the grapevine

THE JAGUAR-LAND Rover showroom in Ortigas has shut down after the landlord increased rent this year by a hefty 12 percent. The Buendia dealership showroom—one is enough given the size and specialty of the local market—remains open.

(Email: cocktales_pdi@pldtdsl.net or cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com)

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of May 11, 2006)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
FINANCIAL					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	6.8	7.2	6.8	7.2	202,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	37.5	37.5	37	37.5	269,800
Bank of the Phil. Islands	68	70.5	68	70	8,372,800
China Banking Corp.	900	900	890	900	11,200
Citystate Savings Bank	20.25	20.25	20.25	20.25	1,600
Export and Ind. Bank A	0.45	0.47	0.45	0.46	5,320,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	72	72.5	71	72	81,400
International Exch. Bank	40	40	40	40	82,800
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	44.5	44.5	43.5	43.5	416,900
Philippine National Bank	37.5	37.5	37.5	37.5	36,000
Phil. Savings Bank	39	39.5	39	39.5	19,600
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	17.5	19.5	17.5	19	271,300
Security Bank Corp.	56	58	56	58	263,100
Union Bank of the Phil.	50	50	49	49.5	18,800
OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
Bankard Inc.	0.76	0.76	0.76	0.76	250,000
First Metro Invest. Corp.	32	32	32	32	11,400
Manulife Financial Corp.	4000	4000	3450	4000	150
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.06	1.12	1.06	1.06	222,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	2125	2130	2125	2130	340
Ivantage Corp.	1.34	1.34	1.28	1.3	3,329,000
INDUSTRIAL					
ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
First Gen Corp.	49	51	49	51	1,431,400
First Phil Hldgs Corp	50.5	52.5	50.5	52.5	804,600
Manila Electric Co. A	14.5	14.75	14.5	14.75	114,200
Manila Electric Co. B	21.5	21.75	21	21.75	1,068,200
Manila Water Co. Inc.	7.7	7.8	7.7	7.8	3,097,000
Petron Corp.	4.85	4.95	4.8	4.95	4,686,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp	0.22	0.23	0.22	0.23	410,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1.18	1.26	1.14	1.16	3,195,000
FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	291,000
CADP Group Corp.	3.1	3.4	3.1	3.3	135,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	24.75	25	24.75	25	209,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	38	39	38	39	859,600
Pancake House Inc.	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	2,000
RFM Corp.	0.75	0.77	0.75	0.77	120,000
Roxas Holdings, Inc.	3.4	3.65	3.2	3.5	5,878,000
Swift Food, Inc.	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	10,000
San Miguel Corp. A	63.5	64	63.5	64	123,900
San Miguel Corp. B	82	83	82	83	172,200
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	28,000
Universal Robina Corp.	23.75	23.75	23.5	23.75	7,849,800
Vitarich Corp.	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	200,000
CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
Southeast Asian Cement	0.38	0.38	0.37	0.38	3,260,000
Engineering Equip. Inc.	1.96	1.96	1.86	1.88	422,000
Fortune Cement Corp.	1.6	1.7	1.6	1.7	185,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	5.2	5.4	5.2	5.4	6,363,000
Republic Cement Corp.	1.6	1.9	1.6	1.9	211,000
CHEMICALS					
Interphil Labs Inc. A	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	30,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.75	0.76	0.75	0.76	230,000
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
Global Equities Inc.	0.1	0.135	0.1	0.13	48,500,000
Steniel Manufacturing	0.56	0.56	0.56	0.56	20,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.008	0.008	0.0075	0.008	110,000,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.0085	0.009	0.0085	0.009	35,000,000
Ayala Corp.	455	457.5	452.5	457.5	92,140
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.54	0.54	0.54	0.54	50,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	6.5	6.6	6.5	6.6	1,386,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.026	0.026	0.025	0.025	10,000,000
A. Soriano Corp.	3.65	3.65	3.5	3.5	731,000
APC Group Inc.	0.26	0.29	0.26	0.27	10,860,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0085	0.0095	0.0085	0.0095	392,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	1.04	1.24	1.04	1.18	12,949,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	2.1	2.1	2	2.04	155,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp	1.16	1.2	1.16	1.2	99,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	60,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	9.5	10	9.5	10	41,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.26	1.26	1.18	1.24	30,599,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	4.95	5	4.9	4.9	3,863,000
Fil-Estate Corp.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	100,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	3.8	3.8	3.7	3.75	1,864,000
House of Investments Inc.	1.5	1.82	1.5	1.8	2,312,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	7.7	7.8	7.7	7.8	758,000
Medco Holdings	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	300,000
Mabuhay Holdings Corp.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	120,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.29	0.29	0.28	0.28	110,000
Pacifica	0.011	0.012	0.011	0.012	5,600,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.215	0.22	0.215	0.22	20,080,000
Prime Media Holdings Inc.	1.12	1.12	1.12	1.12	5,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp	1.54	1.54	1.54	1.54	17,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.17	0.175	0.165	0.17	25,260,000
SM Investments Corp.	250	252.5	249	252.5	74,710
South China Resources Inc.	0.88	1	0.88	1	560,000
Seafront Resources Corp.	0.8	1.08	0.8	1.08	1,240,000
Unioil Res. & Holdings Co	0.07	0.07	0.065	0.07	24,700,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.125	0.125	0.125	0.125	250,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	14.75	14.75	14.5	14.5	9,871,800
Belle Corp.	1.46	1.48	1.4	1.42	29,029,000
A Brown Co. Inc.	0.96	0.96	0.92	0.92	20,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.32	0.33	0.32	0.33	1,550,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	2.36	2.38	2.36	2.38	1,522,000
C&P Homes Inc.	1.8	1.9	1.8	1.88	27,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.225	0.225	0.22	0.22	2,420,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.69	0.69	0.69	0.69	21,500,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.03	0.03	0.029	0.029	1,900,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.68	0.68	0.67	0.67	140,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.74	1.78	1.74	1.78	7,390,000
Interport Res.	0.008	0.0095	0.008	0.009	168,000,000
Interport Res. B	0.008	0.0095	0.008	0.009	162,000,000
Fil-Estate Land, Inc.	0.58	0.59	0.58	0.59	760,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. B	0.018	0.018	0.018	0.018	2,000,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.84	1.84	1.78	1.8	34,141,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.26	0.27	0.26	0.26	22,750,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	0.28	0.29	0.25	0.27	3,720,000
Philippine Estates Corp.	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	100,000
Polar Property Holdings	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	125,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	11.75	12	11.75	12	372,000
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.34	0.35	0.33	0.34	4,710,000
SM Development Corp.	1.82	1.82	1.8	1.82	678,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	8.8	8.8	8.6	8.7	3,985,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	15,450,000
SERVICE					
MEDIA					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp	15.5	16	15.5	15.75	163,200
TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	1.26	1.3	1.26	1.3	7,437,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	1080	1080	1055	1065	38,970
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	3.5	3.7	3.5	3.65	24,828,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	2130	2150	2130	2145	147,170
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	1,450,000
Ionics Inc.	1.42	1.42	1.42	1.42	50,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	4,900,000
Music Semiconductors Corp	1.14	1.2	1.14	1.16	25,000
Philweb Corp.	0.027	0.028	0.027	0.028	248,300,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals, Inc.	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	143,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	13.75	14	13.5	14	3,774,100
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	4,000
HOTEL & LEISURE					
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.68	1.68	1.66	1.68	1,640,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	50,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.59	0.63	0.59	0.63	1,320,000
EDUCATION					
Ipeople Inc.	3.3	3.35	3.3	3.35	933,000
DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
Macroasia Corp.	2.65	2.85	2.5	2.75	9,525,000
Paxys Inc.	12.25	12.75	12.25	12.25	1,334,500
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	4.5	5.1	4.5	4.95	24,444,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc. B	4.4	5.2	4.4	4.9	8,969,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.009	0.01	0.009	0.01	710,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	8.1	8.3	8.1	8.2	2,383,000
Benguet Corp. A	13	14	13	13.25	228,800
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	2.2	2.28	2.2	2.22	390,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.39	0.42	0.39	0.41	71,860,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.43	0.46	0.43	0.45	19,600,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.026	0.027	0.026	0.027	561,300,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.029	0.03	0.028	0.029	450,700,000
Omico Corp.	0.0075	0.008	0.0075	0.008	202,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	4.8	5.5	4.8	5.3	22,332,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	4.9	5.5	4.9	5.3	17,829,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	30.5	31	30	30.5	7,610,100
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.43	0.46	0.42	0.45	1,630,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.62	0.69	0.62	0.68	2,210,000
OIL					
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.3	0.32	0.3	0.32	10,060,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.011	0.013	0.011	0.013	2,377,100,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.012	0.014	0.012	0.014	399,400,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	1.4	1.56	1.38	1.56	17,818,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	1.42	1.58	1.36	1.56	6,548,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	14.75	18	14.75	17.25	10,748,100
PREFERRED					
PLDT (10% Pref) Series C	10	10	10	10	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series L	10	10	10	10	100
WARRANTS, PHIL. DEPOSIT RECEIPTS, ETC.					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp (Pdr)	15	16.25	15	16.25	738,000

CURRENCIES

May 11, 2006 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.781372	1.000000	51.5260
Japan	Yen	0.007084	0.009066	0.4671
United Kingdom	Pound	1.457806	1.865700	96.1321
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.100800	0.129004	6.6471
Switzerland	Franc	0.641942	0.821558	42.3316
Canada	Dollar	0.710920	0.909835	46.8802
Singapore	Dollar	0.500559	0.640615	33.0083
Australia	Dollar	0.605809	0.775314	39.9488
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.072825	2.652801	136.6882
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.208361	0.266660	13.7399
Brunei	Dollar	0.498961	0.638570	32.9030
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000090	0.000115	0.0059
Thailand	Baht	0.020782	0.026597	1.3704
UAE	Dirham	0.212751	0.272279	14.0294
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.279800	65.9430
Argentina	Peso	0.257242	0.329218	16.9633
Brazil	Real	0.380248	0.486642	25.0747
Denmark	Kroner	0.134130	0.171659	8.8449
India	Rupee	0.017426	0.022302	1.1491
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.218261	0.279330	14.3928
Mexico	New Peso	0.072016	0.092166	4.7489
New Zealand	Dollar	0.489214	0.626096	32.2602
Norway	Kroner	0.128931	0.165006	8.5021
South Africa	Rand	0.129377	0.165577	8.5315
Korea	Won	0.000841	0.001076	0.0554
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.024944	0.031923	1.6449

The Maryknoll Sisters of St. Dominic

wish to announce the entrance into eternal life of

Sr. Francis Ann Mulligan, M.M.

on May 3, 2006 at the age of 90

at the Maryknoll Sisters Center in New York.

She had been a Maryknoll Sister for 68 years. She was assigned to the Philippines in 1961 serving in Davao, SOS Children's Village in Lipa City, and a pastoral worker in Santiago, Isabela.

CESAR ARIZABAL FERAREN

Vigan, Ilocos Sur
Former Dep-Ed Administrative Officer, Manila
Trainer - Adamson University Junior Basketball Team
Basketball Referee

Peacefully joined our Creator on May 9, 2006 at the age of 80.

His loving wife CONSOLACION PALAFOX, son JULIUS & daughter-in-law TINA, sisters LUCILA & VICENTE (†), ROSARIO & NICK, MA. VICTORIA & PIO (†), brothers-in-law; HONORATO & FLORA, BENJAMIN & VIRGINIA, sisters-in-law; NENITA & MACARIO and MOBINA, nieces and nephews, friends and relatives request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Arlington Memorial Chapels, 12 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Sunday, May 14, 2006 at Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City, after the Morning Mass at 9:00 o'clock in Arlington Memorial Chapels.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

Always caring...

INQUIRER OBITUARIES

OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:

❶ Copy of Death Certificate

❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

WE ACCEPT CREDIT CARDS and bank-to-bank payments

Our Dearly Beloved

DR. MARCELINO S. REYES

Peacefully joined our Lord on May 10, 2006
at the age 85.

His loving wife **Patrocinio** (Sening); children **Linda & Nolly, Francis, Annie & Ben,** sisters **Carmen & Norberta**, grandchildren, great grandchildren, nieces, nephews, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Nacional Memorial Homes, G. Araneta Ave., Q. C.

Interment will be on Sunday, May 14, 2006 at Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina

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Our Dearly Beloved

ROSARIO 'SISTER CHARING' MONASTERIAL SUSARA

peacefully joined our Lord and her husband Ramon Z. Susara
on May 10, 2006 at the age of 88.

Her children and spouses, **Iggy** (†) **& Espee, Evelyn & Carlo, Luis & Nora** (†), **Marita & Ben, Mario & Baby, Mila & Oscar, Bobby & Lina, Sammy & Bess, Boy & Perla, Bong & Leony**, and **Benjie**; grandchildren, great grandchildren, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Nacional Memorial Homes, Gregorio Araneta Ave., Quezon City.

Interment will be on Tuesday, May 16, 2006 at Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City after the 1:00 p.m. Mass.

Our Beloved Mother

REGINA "Gening" R. LOPEZ

September 7, 1915 - May 6, 2006

Peacefully joined our Creator
on May 6, 2006 at the age of 90.

Her loving husband **Salvador "Bading" Lopez** (†), children **Renato, Frankie** (†), **Tessie "A", Neneng, Cynthia, Bhoie, Onging,** grandchildren and great grandchildren request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in Ambassador Chapel at St. Peter Memorial Chapel Inc., 296 Quezon Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be held on Saturday, 13th of May 2006 at Plaridel Catholic Cemetery after the 7:00 a.m. Mass.

Our Beloved

VIRGINIA ASESOR VDA. DE ARAÑO

of San Juan Crisostomo, Anilao, Iloilo

Peacefully joined our Lord on May 9, 2006 at the age of 98.

Her children **Evelyn, Senene, Melinda** and grandchildren request your prayers for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at Arlington Memorial Chapel, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Saturday, May 13, 2006 at Himlayang Pilipino, Tandang Sora, Quezon City after the 1:00 p.m. Mass at the grave with her grandson Rev. Fr. Alejo Simon Araño III as the officiating priest.

Our Beloved Mama and Lola

Silvia Araneta vda de Torres

January 11, 1912 – May 11, 2006

peacefully joined our Lord on May 11, 2006 at the age of 94.

Her children, in-laws, grandchildren and great grandchildren request relatives and friends to join them in praying for her eternal happiness.

Arnaldo and Ma. Cecilia Javelona and Children
Josephine; Suzette and John De Sello, Camille, Nicole, John-John; Erwin and Nella, Joan, Silvie Joboy, April Joy; John and Pamela, Johnielle, Jela; Andrew and Tess, Andrea; Christine and Ray Bolardo, Miguel, Gabby; Jude and Anabelle, MJ, Carla

A. Raul Torres Jr and Ma. Catalina (+) and Children
Marianne and Paul, Angel, Katherine, Kimi; Jojo, Gee-Gee, Agnes, Anton and Irish, Pauline

Johnny and Mercy Torres and Children
Michelle and Dave Jones, Ty Justin; JP, Taryn, JR, Meleen

Ignacio and Ma. Silvia Javellana and Children
Jay and Maica, Gabby, Ger and Armee, Aly; Loy and Jing, Bea, Josh; David; Mel and Winnie, Belle

Francisco (+) and Victoria Torres and Son Francisco Jr

Her remains lie in state at Alisbo Memorial in Mandalagan, Bacolod City. Interment will be on May 14, 2006, Sunday, at Bacolod Sacred Heart Memorial Park. Details for the Mass to be announced later.

We design **obituaries** for free.

CLASSIFIEDS

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

Please be informed that **MR. CARLITO C. GALITA** whose picture appears below has ceased to be connected in any capacity with **AIRBORNE SECURITY SERVICE, INC.** effective November 17, 2005.

Any transactions entered into with this person from and after the date mentioned above shall not be honored and shall not be for the responsibility of the company.

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Andrea Bldg. 1, 1009 G.M. Tolentino St., Sampaloc, Manila
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(PDI - May 8, 10 & 12, 2006)

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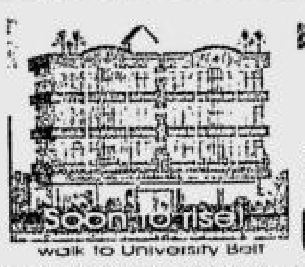

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NOTICE OF MISSING O.R.

This is to inform the general public, particularly Aboitiz One customers, that the following Official Receipts of Aboitiz One, Inc. are missing and declared lost:

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to
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Accordingly, Aboitiz One, Inc., will not honor transactions for which the above enumerated Official Receipts were issued.

(PDI--May 12, 2006)

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the ChinaBank dollar savings accounts and certificate of time deposits of the late DIVINA B. PERALTA was adjudicated thru Extra-Judicial Settlement by her surviving heirs and shall be released thru S.P.A. Jesus B. Peralta as per Doc. No. 388, Page 77, Book IV, Series of 2006, of Notary Public Henry S. Banares, ARN 19348.

(PDI– May 12, 19 & 26, 2006)

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
SEC Bldg., EDSA, Greenhills, Mandaluyong City, Metro Manila

SEC-CFD ORDER No. 049
Series of 2005

IN THE MATTER OF THE
PRUDENTIALIFE FIXED INCOME FUND, INC.
–Registrant–

Registration of Securities under the Securities Regulation Code

x- -x

ORDER

Upon consideration of the Registration Statement and other papers and documents attached thereto which were filed for and on behalf of **PRUDENTIALIFE FIXED INCOME FUND, INC.** the Commission in its meeting of April 6, 2006, resolved to render effective the same for the registration of the company's Three Hundred Million (300,000,000) common shares with a par value of P1.00 each, representing its latest increase in its authorized capital stock.

A Certificate of Permit to Offer Securities for Sale authorizing the sale of said securities is issued with this Order.

Let a copy of this **ORDER** be published at the expense of the corporation once a week for two (2) consecutive weeks in two (2) newspapers of general circulation in the Philippines within ten (10) days from date of this **ORDER**. The subject company is hereby directed to furnish the Commission with a copy of the affidavit of publication of this **ORDER**.

SO ORDERED.

April 12, 2006, EDSA, Greenhills, City of Mandaluyong, Metro Manila, Philippines.

(Sgd.) **JUSTINA F. CALLANGAN**
Director

(PDI–May 5 & 12, 2006)

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ERRATUM

WVSUMC regrets to announce that it will rescind and cancel its notice of "Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid" published on April 29, 2006 and May 6, 2006 at the Philippine Daily Inquirer in view of the errors contained in said notice.

(Sgd.) **ANNA VICTORIA J. SOMBONG, M.D.**
BAC-Chairman
WVSUMC

(PDI--May 12, 2006)

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Roger Recor
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NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

We have been receiving information that there are people who are using **AIRBORNE SECURITY SERVICE, INC.** for the purpose of maligning its dignity and reputation to gain advantage for personal interest.

Please beware of these people.

Should you come across the identity of these people, please report to our office immediately.

AIRBORNE SECURITY SERVICE, INC.
Andrea Bldg. 1, 1009 G.M. Tolentino St., Sampaloc, Manila
Tel. No.: (02) 7357554/55/59; Fax No.: (02) 7357557
(PDI - May 8, 10 & 12, 2006)

IATSS FORUM ALUMNI PHILIPPINES' NEWLY ELECTED OFFICERS INDUCTED

IATSS (International Association of Traffic and Safety Sciences), a non-stock, non-profit organization which focuses its efforts on traffic safety recently held the oath-taking ceremony of its newly elected officers at the University of the Philippines campus. Shown in photo are (from left) Undersecretary Fortunato dela Pena, Chairperson of the National Committee, Jennette Montebon, President, Hazel Ludovice, Vice-President, Ana Hernandez, Secretary, Gigi Gotangco, Treasurer and Grace Agoncillo, Auditor.

MEYCAUAYAN-FILIPINAS PAWNSHOP
ALIW COMPLEX, CALVARIO, MECY, BULACAN. ALL UNREDEEMED PLEDGES OF NOV. 2005 WILL BE AUCTIONED ON MAY 24, 10:00 AM. LANUZA & SONS - AUCTIONEER

MARILAO-FILIPINAS PAWNSHOP,
M&R BLDG. TABING ILOG, MARILAO, BULACAN. ALL UNREDEEMED PLEDGES OF NOV. 2005 WILL BE AUCTIONED ON MAY 24, 8:00 AM. LANUZA & SONS - AUCTIONEER

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HIGHEST APPRAISAL
8040484/8342886

World Telecommunication Day observed May 17

UNITED NATIONS SECRETARY-GENeral Kofi Annan and ITU Secretary-General Yoshio Utsumi recently informed ITU member states, including the Philippines, that May 17 will be observed this year, as it has been marked every year throughout the world since the early '60s, as World Telecommunication Day. This event commemorates the founding of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the specialized arm for telecommunications of the United Nations, 141 years ago.

Both Annan and Utsumi emphasized the fact that World Telecommunication Day 2006 carries added significance this year. According to the Tunis phase of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) this day starting this year will be referred to as the "World Information Society Day". This year's theme for World Telecommunication Day is: "Promoting Global Cybersecurity" to highlight the serious challenges the world now faces in ensuring the safety and security of critical networked information and communications infrastructure.

The ITU is now coordinating with the Commission on Information and Communications Technology (CICT), the telecommunications administration for the Philippines, through CICT Commissioner Damian Domingo "Dondi" O. Mapa. Newly appointed CICT Chair Ramon P. Sales is expected to deliver the keynote address to open the two-day Conference-Workshop now being planned on May 17 and 18 at the Dusit Hotel Nikko in Makati City. Also expected to speak is the Commissioner of the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) Ronald Olivar Solis.

One of the special features of this year's celebration of World Telecommunication Day is the publication of a Special Supplement in the nation's daily with the biggest circulation, The Philippine Daily Inquirer. This issue will focus on the progress achieved so far by our country in the field of information and communications technologies (ICT) and record the events that will take place during 2006 World Telecommunications Day in the Philippines. The May 17 issue of the Philippine Daily Inquirer will carry a Special Supplement on the World Telecommunication Day. The publications, media and events group of the telecommunications consulting firm CD Castro Consultancy Inc (CDCCI) is coordinating events and programs that will be held during the 2006 World Telecommunication Day with the ITU.

For more information about the 2006 World Telecommunication Day, call the publications, media and events group of CDCCi at 889-9110 or e-mail cdcastro@info.com.ph.

KOFI Annan

YOSHIO Utsumi

RAMON P. Sales

RONALD Olivar Solis

DAMIAN Domingo O. Mapa

SALEM INAUGURATES RENOVATED STORE

On March 21, Salem Oceanic Industries Corp, manufacturer of 'Hari Ng Tibay' Mattress and Foam, inaugurated its newly renovated store, now known as Life So Easy, located along 1 Van Burren Street Pio Del Pilar, Makati (along South Super Highway). The store was initially opened in 2000 and was formerly known as Salem House. It showcased both local and imported goods for all market segments. It was then temporarily closed for renovation to improve the showroom. Shown at the ribbon-cutting ceremony is its president and CEO Benjamin S. Tiu with wife vice president Myrna L. Tiu, with special guest Bro. Roland Esguerra, district minister, Iglesia Ni Cristo. The company continues to uphold the tradition of providing all Filipino families the highest quality yet affordable products only Salem Oceanic Industries can offer. For more information, call 887-4597.

Letrozole effective as initial treatment after surgery in early breast cancer

A STUDY WHICH WAS DONE TO COMPARE the efficacy of two drugs for breast cancer showed that letrozole is more effective as an initial therapy after surgery in post-menopausal women with early breast cancer compared with tamoxifen.

The results of Breast International Group 1-98 (BIG 1-98) published in The New England Journal of Medicine showed that letrozole (Femara) reduced the risk of breast cancer returning by an additional 19 percent over the reduction offered by tamoxifen. Furthermore, patients taking letrozole showed a 27-percent reduction in the risk of the cancer spreading to distant parts of the body.

"One of the greatest fears confronted by women who have been treated for early breast cancer is that their cancer will come back," says Dr. Matthew Ellis, section head of the Medical Oncology Division in the Department of Medicine at Washington University in St. Louis. "With letrozole we now have an option that can help address that fear early on, even in patients who we know face the greatest risk of recurrence."

In addition, BIG 1-98 showed that women with metastatic breast cancer who were given letrozole as first-line treatment had a significantly higher response rate, longer time for disease progression and a significant improvement in one to two-year survival rates compared to others who were given a different drug.

Due to the favorable results of the BIG 1-98 study, the US Food and Drug Administration has approved the use of letrozole as adjuvant treatment immediately after surgery among post-menopausal women with hormone-sensitive early breast cancer. In the Philippines, the Bureau of Food and Drug Administration has also approved the use of letrozole for the same indication.

According to Dr. Diane Young, vice president and global head of Clinical Development at Novartis Oncology, letrozole has consistently demonstrated superiority over tamoxifen as first-line therapy in women with metastatic breast cancer as well as in post-menopausal women with hormone-sensitive early breast cancer.

"In addition, letrozole provides a notable benefit to patients who are especially high risk of having their breast cancer return," she said.

Patients are informed that letrozole, along with all drugs for breast cancer, is a prescription drug and should only be taken upon doctor's advice.

Goodwill Bookstore's summer surprises

SUMMER—THE TIME TO IMmerse in good, refreshing, uplifting and invigorating books.

Looking for good books these hot, summer days? Goodwill Bookstore is giving a soothing summer treat. Be part of the Great Summer Sale ongoing until May 16. Enjoy and splurge on cool prices and big discounts: Pocketbooks at P80, 60-percent discounts on selected children's books, trade and reference books.

Here's an added treat for book enthusiasts. Goodwill Bookstore is giving a special 20-percent discount on regular items and 5 percent off on selected classics.

Visit Goodwill Bookstore, your family-friendly bookstore outlets now, where the coolest, most refreshing surprises await you this summer.

DANSART NOTES TO HEAVEN

The Angels Theatre Ensemble (ATE) of Dansart Angels Academy will present the four Hollywood box office hits of theater and movie films: 'Cats', 'Phantom of the Opera', 'Grease' and 'Miss Saigon' at SM City Dasmariñas, Cavite on May 13 at 4 p.m. Under the supervision and the diligent support of its directors/advisers, Donabel L. Cabela and Michael Arjay F. Cao, the young talented members of ATE performed the said play with justice. Consequently, the group received good reviews after staging these for the first time during the DAA foundation week last February. ATE also performed original plays: 'Tanod Lupa' (of Teatro Pilipino) and 'Sa Piling Ni Bathala'. Dansart Angels Academy situated at Rome Street, Summerwind Village 4, Dasmariñas, Cavite was founded by Mr and Ms Danilo Sarte. Mariglen C. Fajardo, the principal, is from UP. This school is making history for it is among the pioneer if not the first to grant 35 scholarships in the field of Theatre Arts, from Grades 4 to High School.

Target HDL-C levels for Asians set

MERCK INC SPONSORED A symposium on the importance of raising HDL cholesterol in reducing cardiovascular disease risk during the recent joint annual convention of the Philippine Lipid Society and Philippine Society of Hypertension.

Dr. Rody Sy, cardiologist and associate professor at the University of the Philippines College of Medicine, presented the recommendations of the Pan-Asian Consensus Panel, which suggests that the HDL-C target in Asian countries should be at least 40 mg/dL.

The panel likewise recommends that treatment of low HDL-C should also be considered within the context of global cardiovascular risk management. Low HDL-C has been established as an independent risk factor that can predict the occurrence of future coronary heart disease (CHD). Treatment of low HDL-C is therefore seen as an important step in the prevention of CHD and other cardiovascular diseases.

The Pan-Asian Consensus Panel suggests that nicotinic acid, a medicine for the treatment of low HDL-C, "may prove to be a useful therapeutic intervention, as monotherapy or in combination with a statin, in Asian patients with or at risk of CHD, including those with type 2 diabetes and metabolic syndrome."

The Pan-Asian Consensus Panel, composed of specialists from 10 countries including the Philippines, was convened to give recommendations on the target level of HDL-C for the Asian population, as well as recommended treatment and management of low HDL-C. Sy, together with Dr. Annette Borromeo from the Philippine Heart Center and Dr. Elizabeth Paz-Pacheco from The Medical City, were the country's representatives to the panel.

TiS launches 30-in tire in NY Auto Show

FROM 2006
DEBUTS AT THE NEW YORK AUTO SHOW

TWENTY INCHES strong (TiS) officials were on hand to personally unveil the world's first and only production 30-inch wheel and tire combo at the glitzy 23rd New York International Motorshow April 14th.

TIS wheels, the trendsetter in aftermarket custom wheels, is set to fire up the industry with the introduction of a finely crafted and distinctive 8-spoke, 3-piece wheel which is the first in the company's new Thirty Inches Strong line. As with all TIS brand wheels, these monstrous thirties feature Phat Lip technology, which allows for the deepest lip wheels on the road today. The first set of these monumental wheels and tires have been sold to MTV's Bam Margera from Viva La Bam-valued at just under $150,000!

TIS is the most significant brand in the luxury automotive wheel market. Exceptional designs, superior style, and a wide range of sizes (starting at 20 inches) distinguish the TIS Luxury Wheel Collection into its own class. To view the complete Twenty Inches Strong Premium Wheel product line, visit the showroom display of Wheel Gallery at 318 Kartek Center, Santolan Road, Greenhills, San Juan. Wheel Gallery is the official and exclusive TiS distributor in the country. "We are accepting special orders for the Thirty Inches Strong wheel line up. Interested parties can view the 30-inch wheel and tire package in our showroom and see how 30 inches strong transforms your ride," states Michelle Aberin of Wheel Gallery.

Both wheel and tire models are available now with more information soon available at www.tiswheels.com and www.conceptonewheels.com. Call 724-7176 for inquiries.

Spies up your summer with 'Totally Spies'

SAM, ALEX AND CLOVER OF THE HIT French animated series "Totally Spies" are up for an exciting summer getaway-where else but in the beautiful islands of the Philippines! While it's a time for leisure, the teen Spies had to carry out at least two missions assigned by WOOHP Head Jerry before they can get a tan at the white beaches of Boracay;

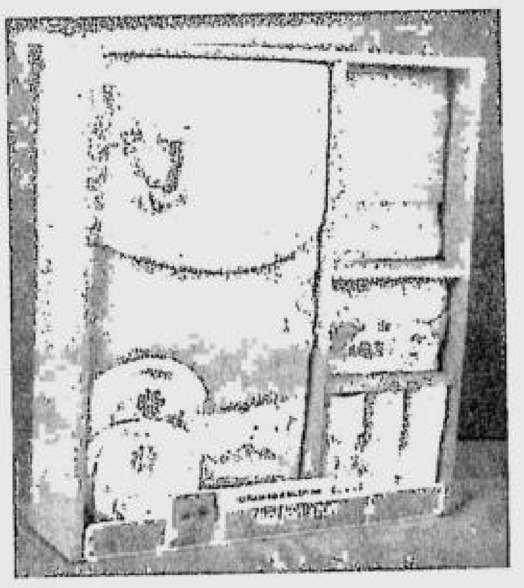
Mission 1: Catch the Spies as they're tasked to give away their totally cool gadgets this summer through the country's leading fast food chain Jollibee. Get a hold of your very own sleek Sticker Blower, Lipstick Stamper, and Crayon Organizer when you avail yourself of your favorite Jollibee Kids Meal. Each cool gadget comes with a handy CD case comprising the Chic Art Set. Promo is ongoing until May 17. Hurry and collect all now!

Mission 2: Aside from perking up every little kid's summer adventures, the Spies are also designated to prep up for the next school year through allocation of Totally Spies-y school stuff at all leading bookstores and department stores nationwide. While Totally Spies bags, shoes, clothes and other trendy merchandise are already available in the market, new Totally Spies items await moms and kids alike as a leading back-to-school manufacturer introduces new sets of notebooks, drawing books, pencil cases and wrappers. The list goes on as Totally Spies also formally launches other products such as diaries, autograph books, photo albums, photo boxes, coin banks, scrap book, invitation cards and sumptuous party goods, which are already available at leading bookstores and novelty stores nationwide.

Still can't get enough of Totally Spies? Then maybe a chat with the girls to endorse your products will make a difference. Interested parties are invited to be part of Totally Spies' worldwide licensing and merchandising program. For inquiries, call 722-4311 or email licensing@empiremultimedia.com. Log on to www.empiremultimedia.com.

BABY'S HIP HAPPENING SUMMER

Clothe baby in 100% cotton baby essentials from head to toe so that he or she stays cool, comfortable, stylish and ultra-cute throughout the hot summer season. Ensure that only the best and most suitable materials touch your baby's delicate skin by looking for the Cotton USA mark in all of your baby's essentials. Cotton Stuff Baby, a premier retailer of infants' clothing and other essentials, launches its summer promo that gives shoppers the chance to take home a limited edition 10-piece Baby Essentials Gift Set worth over P1,300. For a minimum single receipt purchase of P100 from Cotton Stuff branches located at the Infant's Wear Section of 20 SM Department Stores entitles the shopper to one tracking card.



Each time an additional P100 worth of items is purchased, shoppers will receive a stamp on the tracking card. Once 10 stamps have been accumulated, surrender the card and the Cotton Stuff Baby Essentials Gift Set is yours for the taking, absolutely free. Stamps and Cotton Stuff Baby Essentials Gift Sets may be redeemed from until June 1. Whatever you buy for baby, remember that cotton is key!

TeleTech.
The Science of Customer Management

Cainta welcomes TeleTech

By Raquel Gomez

TELETECH, A LEADING GLOBAL BUSINESS process outsourcing (BPO) provider, continually and rapidly expands its presence in the country with the opening of a customer management center (CMC) in Cainta. This event is seen as a most welcome development in the area known as the gateway to the Rizal province.

The Cainta CMC is the fourth location to be established by the company over the last four years. Currently, TeleTech CMCs are established in Fort Bonifacio, Pasay City, and Novaliches, Quezon City.

GEOFF Domigpe, site director, Cainta CMC

> 'It's very timely that we are building the site, we are building our teams, we are building relationships with our clients and we are also building the culture here'

TeleTech was founded by Kenneth Tuchman in California in 1982. Today, TeleTech has operations in 16 countries and on four continents, managing over two million interactions in up to 28 languages and 43 countries every day - with the capability to serve customers in up to 150 languages

The Cainta site is said to be TeleTech's largest CMC in the country with total floor space of more than 11,000 square-meters. The center is characterized by state-of-the-art technology and ultra-modern facilities. It has more than 1,200 agent seats, several fully-equipped training rooms and e-learning laboratories, and a welcoming Talent Acquisition area.

This new CMC has several features never before seen in other TeleTech CMCs in the country. There is an auditorium that can be used either as a training laboratory or an entertainment center where employees can unwind by watching films. The center is handicap accessible - guests use the walkalator from the main entrance to the office. A 24 x 7 full-service restaurant will serve a wide range of cuisine.

With the opening of its newest CMC located in Cainta, Rizal, TeleTech displays its continued confidence in the Philippines and the Filipino talent. Considered as the largest center not only in the country but also globally, Cainta CMC is an affirmation of bigger things to

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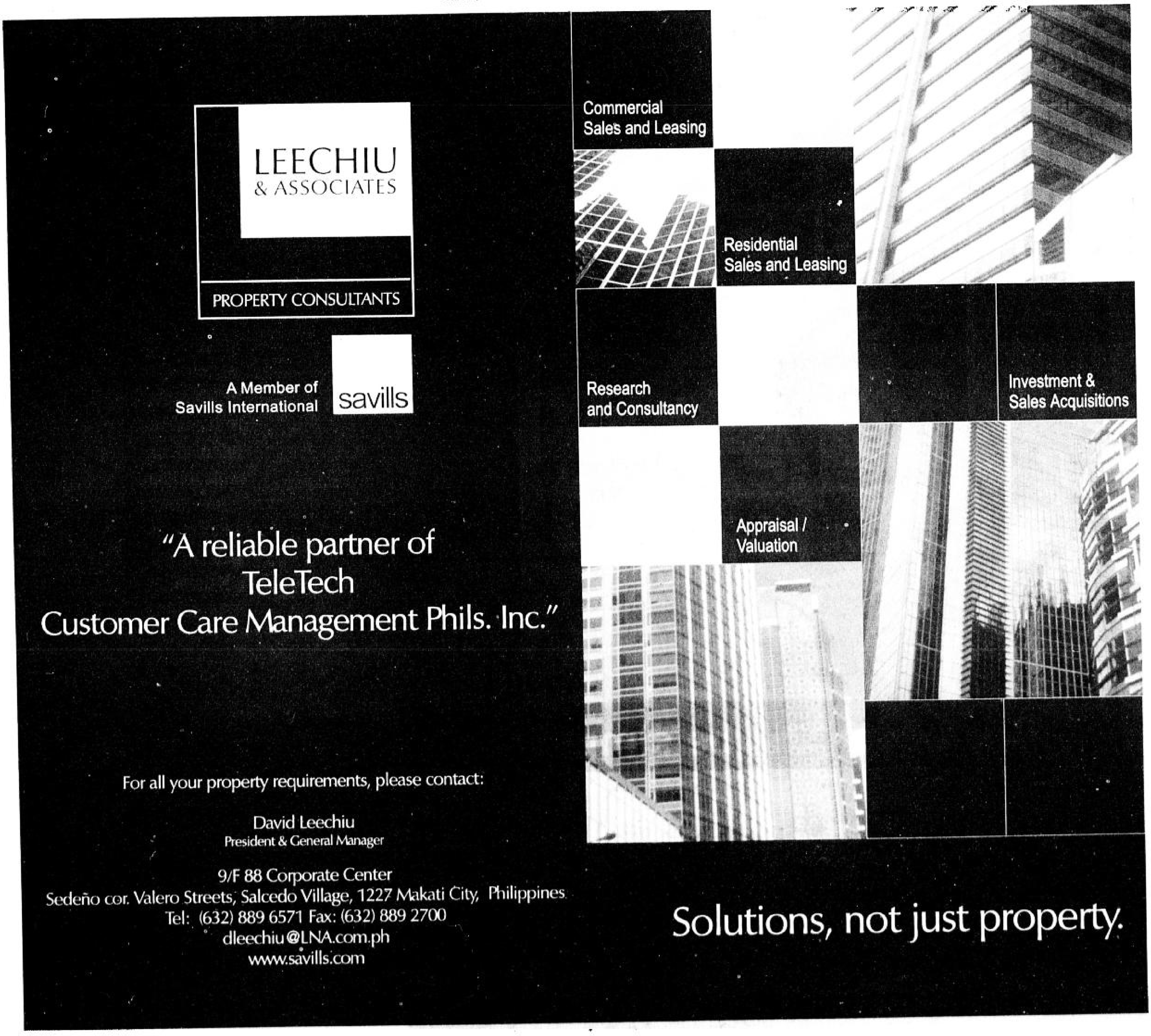
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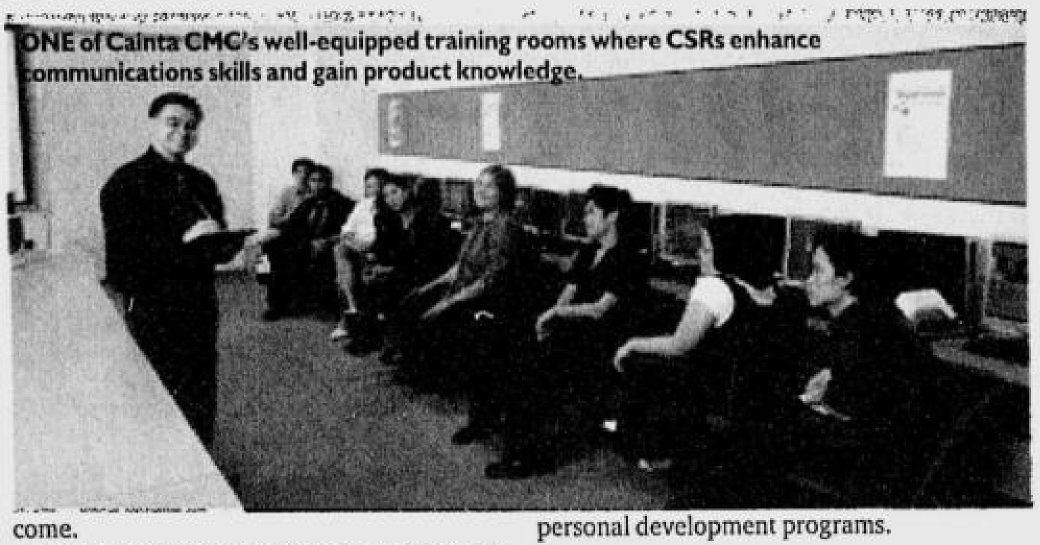
Solutions, not just property.

Cainta welcomes TeleTech

From page B7

'Working with TeleTech has helped me achieve most of my ambitions and my personal goals. Here, I have a career and I am able to pursue a balanced lifestyle,' she says. 'Some people find going to work so taxing. Not me. Home is just a few minutes drive so I have more time to be with my family. And because Cainta is so close to commercial centers, it's very convenient for me to meet up with friends after work,' says Bulanhagui


ONE of Cainta CMC's well-equipped training rooms where CSRs enhance communications skills and gain product knowledge.

come.

Cainta, described as a first-class municipality dotted by subdivisions and residential areas, stands to benefit economically from the newly established TeleTech CMC. The company's presence will attract economic activity and will generate jobs for the people of Cainta. "When any organization comes to a community, it can often be difficult to measure the economic impact. I have been told that our economic impact has a multiplier effect of eight times. Meaning, when employees of a company spend money in the community, that amount will directly impact on eight individuals," said Mel Vance, executive director of International Operations.

"Clearly we are happy to help contribute to the economic development, but more importantly we are ecstatic about what the community provides us in the form of what we consider our most valuable resource - our employees," said Vance.

Cainta Mayor Ramon Ilagan has expressed great pride with the arrival of TeleTech because it is the first big step towards his vision of transforming Cainta into a knowledge - and technology-based municipality.

Vance commented that the company's move into Cainta is in line with TeleTech's "Lifestyle Initiative," wherein the company gives priority to activities that encourage employees to enjoy a productive and healthy lifestyle. "We recognize the fact that most of our employees do not reside in what I like to call the "call center row" so when we were looking to construct our fourth site in the Metro Manila area, Cainta was a natural choice. We have been able to reduce a two hour travel time to 15 minutes. We even have employees who are able to walk or ride their bikes to work."

The vision for the newly opened CMC is parallel with the general direction of the entire TeleTech enterprise, which is to "build and create value," according to Geoffrey Domigpe, Cainta site director

Domigpe said Cainta, is very near the financial districts which will soon be developed into the future hub of the call center industry. "We will be an active partner of Cainta's positioning and growth in this market," Domigpe emphasized. "We're grateful for the support from the local government both in terms of recruitment efforts and in promoting TeleTech."

The employer of choice

Backed by its key observations and learning from its four years of operating in the Philippines, TeleTech has created an employee development program coupled with a lifestyle program that promises to raise the bar for human capital management in the industry.

"What sets us apart from the rest is our focus on the professional and personal development of our employees," according to Craig Reines, vice president and general manager of North Asia operations.

Reines says, "We have built this Lifestyle Program to drive significant benefits unparalleled in the industry. This is targeted directly at our employees and their families." The TeleTech Lifestyle Program offers special deals and discounts exclusively for TeleTech employees. The program promotes health and fitness, various after work activities, and personal development programs.

Aiming for work-life balance

Sharron Bulanhagui is a senior operations manager at the Cainta CMC. She handles six campaigns that include sales, healthcare, telecommunications, high speed Internet services, and car insurance. Sharon is just one of the satisfied employees who saw her career blossom at TeleTech.

Bulanhagui joined TeleTech three years ago as a team leader for a healthcare account before being promoted to operations manager for the online retailing account at the Pasay City CMC. She was an operations manager for eight months before her advancement to senior operations manager.

Bulanhagui seized another opportunity when she learned TeleTech was moving into Cainta which is just a few minutes from her home.

"Working with TeleTech has helped me achieve most of my ambitions and my personal goals. Here, I have a career and I am able to pursue a balanced lifestyle," she says. "Some people find going to work so taxing. Not me. Home is just a few minutes drive so I have more time to be with my family. And because Cainta is so close to commercial centers, it's very convenient for me to meet up with friends after work," says Bulanhagui.

A fulfilling job

Neil Vargas, operations manager at CMC Cainta, clearly remembers that the site where the Robinsons Place mall now stands used to be a rice paddy. A long-time resident of Cainta, Neil says the area was very rural then, with fewer people, and the beginnings of residential development.

Vargas says that TeleTech's Cainta CMC will provide a good opportunity not only for the community but for the residents as well.

"I know this place. I know the people here. And it's a good thing that TeleTech decided to come here. The contact center and BPO industry is now booming and Cainta residents, as well as the nearby areas of Cainta, can have a chance to move up and enjoy more job opportunities."

He says the establishment of the very first BPO center in Cainta will attract other investments into Cainta as well. "The city's spreading and Cainta is getting the attention of big players or companies. TeleTech has been bringing the company closer to where its employees live and I think that's a great strategy," Vargas asserted.

Vargas handles a technical support account and managing 180 people. He used to work at TeleTech Roxas CMC, but upon hearing that TeleTech will open a center in Cainta, he opted to be transferred there. "Now it only takes me 15 minutes to get to the office! With the two hours of travel time that I saved by working in Cainta I can now go to the gym or enjoy a cup of coffee with friends."

A graduate of St. Benilde, Vargas has been with TeleTech for more than two years. He looks forward to staying long at his job. "I find fulfillment with what I do here. TeleTech offers you a balanced work-life. The company gives you avenues where you can improve your physical condition, health, mental growth, and emotional growth. TeleTech focuses on employees' holistic development. That's the first thing that I learned when I came to TeleTech. Our organization develops us to become better leaders, better managers."

Happy employees satisfy customers

Amy Alde is in charge of human capital delivery at TeleTech Cainta CMC. She says TeleTech customer service representatives (CSRs) are well-trained to handle the job. The CSRs undergo intensive training programs, tests, and are coached before going into actual production

Giving rewards and recognizing achievements encourage employees to work harder at attaining their objectives.

Alde says all of TeleTech's facilities are very employee-friendly. This facility is designed in such a way that the employees would have cozy break rooms and a 24-hour restaurant. "We also have quiet rooms or sleeping quarters that are provided with fresh beddings, linens, and pillows. TeleTech is one of the companies that really looks after its people," says Alde. "We want our employees to feel proud about working in TeleTech. Through the programs we have you can see that the management is very serious about satisfying our staff. We believe happy employees will be happy customer service representatives," Amy concludes.

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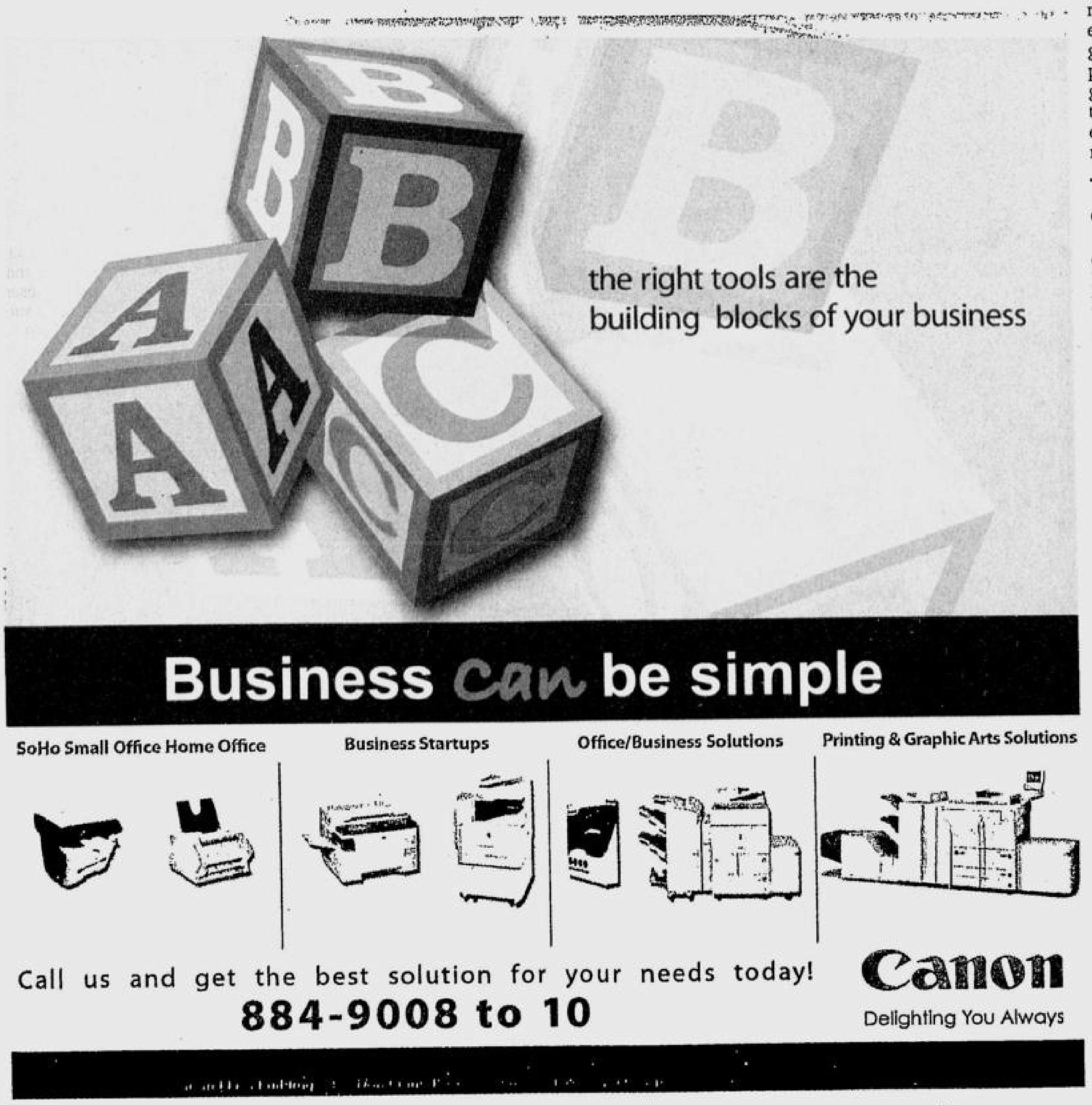
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TeleTech opens Philippines CMCs to families and friends

TELETECH UNDERSTANDS THE IMPORTANCE of family-that's why, on March 5 and 12, the doors of the Philippines' customer management centers (CMCs) in Novaliches and Roxas were opened to welcome employees' families and friends. This fun event was dubbed "TeleTech Family Tour Day 2006".

With the adept planning of the CMCs' employee recognition teams, guests were treated to a 20-minute guided tour of the CMCs. This gave them a chance to see the sites' amenities. Many were amazed at how beautiful the offices are with the colorful walls, high-tech facilities, and quiet rooms.

After the tour, employees with their families were led to the activity area for a short program and a meet-and-greet session with the TeleTech management team. Children enjoyed games, entertainment, face painting, and arts and crafts activities.

It's evident that TeleTech is proud of its employees in the Philippines and around the world. "They're all world-class and highly professional," commented Craig Reines, vice president and general manager, North Asia operations. "We want them to feel privileged working for TeleTech. We also want their families, relatives, and neighbors to feel good that they know someone who works for a great company like TeleTech."

FAMILY and friends enjoy the guided tour in one of TeleTech's state-of-the-art Customer Management Centers (CMCs).

TeleTech For Others
TeleTech

TELETECH employees are shown in photo during a nursery-preparation activity at the La Mesa Dam watershed.

People, Events & Products

Graphic Expo '06 kicks off annual animation, digital art competitions

THE ANNUAL ANIMATION AND DIGITAL ART competitions for the prestigious Graphic Expo 2006 have begun, with entries from amateurs and professionals now being accepted.

The winning works will be exhibited at the Philippine Trade Training Center from June 14 to 17 during the staging of Graphic Expo 2006, the country's premier trade show on desktop and web publishing, digital photography and imaging, pre-press, print production, large format printing, multimedia, and animation.

Qualified to join the 5th Animation Competition are design and animation studios, production houses, schools and universities, training institutes, animators, multimedia specialists, and web masters.

Competition categories are amateur/student level, and professional. Participants can use any animation software, preferably 3d. The theme is "Filipino Life and Magic."

The concept should be original, entertaining, and wholesome. Use of logos, brand names, foul language or action, and violence is banned. Maximum running time for animation entry is two minutes for amateur/student level, and three minutes for professional.

Entries, which must include concept and storyboard, should be submitted in CD Rom format using Quick Time with 800 x 600 resolution, no compression. Audio format should be in 44khz 16 bits stereo.

For the Annual Digital Art Competition 2006, qualified to join are professional and amateur graphic and digital designers, web masters, photographers, and digital artists. The categories are digital graphic design, digital fine art, and web design.

For preliminary judging, entries must be printed on A4-size photo or inkjet

paper, except for web design where the works must be submitted in the form of URL.

The participants can use scanned imagery and digital painting techniques through various available graphics software. Each entry must be accompanied by a one-paragraph concept brief. Contestants can submit unlimited number of entries.

For the web design, entries should reflect the designers' creativity, originality, and understanding of the unique challenges in this field. Web sites will be judged for appearance, flexibility, navigation, interactivity and suitability for their target audiences.

All entries to any of the two competitions - Digital Art, and Animation - must not have photos, images, symbols and artworks whose copyrights belong to other persons. Deadline for submission of entries is on May 19.

Each entry should include the name of the artist, address, company/school/training institute, contact person, telephone, fax and mobile numbers, and email address, and must be submitted to Fiera de Manila (Zen Bldg., 8352 Mayapis St., San Antonio Village, Makati City; call center: 8960639, 8960637, 8996216; email: fiera@info.com.ph; website: www.fmi.com.ph, www.graphicexpo.com.ph).

Prizes in cash and in kind await the winners. Announcement and awarding of the winners will be held on June 14 at the opening ceremonies of the Graphic Expo 2006, which is now on its 11th year.

Graphic Expo 2006 is supported by EPSON, Hewlett Packard, Canon, eArt Phils., IdN Club Phils., Zone V Camera Club, Philippine Center for Creative Imaging, Outdoor Advertising Association of the Philippines, and Animation Council of the Philippines, and sponsored by Philippine Daily Inquirer, Philippine Star, IT Update, Computerworld, Softrigger Interactive, Digital Fox, GA Printing Inc., Web Philippines, BusinessWorld, and Manila Bulletin.

ands 2006
Consu

PHILAMLIFE IS RP'S FIRST PLATINUM TRUSTED BRAND AWARDEE

Philamlife recently became the country's first and only financial institution to be named a Platinum Trusted Brand by Reader's Digest Asia in its 2006 Trusted Brands Survey conducted by AC Nielsen. This marks Philamlife's record third straight Platinum award from Reader's Digest. Philamlife president and CEO Jose L. Cuisia Jr (2nd from left) is shown receiving the Platinum Trusted Brand plaque together with Philamlife senior vice president and chief marketing officer Lizanne Uychaco (4th from left) during the awarding ceremony at the Manila Peninsula. With them are (from left) Mark Cass, Reader's Digest Asia advertising director, editor-in-chief Jim Plouffe, regional advertising director Simon Cholmeley, and advertising sales director Lilet Yan. Philamlife received the highest score among all the life insurance firms, banks, and investment fund companies chosen by Philippine consumers in the survey, which asked respondents to name their favorite companies across 42 categories and rate them according to quality, value, strong image, innovativeness, trustworthiness, and understanding of consumer needs. Philamlife scored more than double its closest competitor, earning the company an unprecedented third consecutive Platinum award.

BEST DRESSED AWARD

Young business executive Jaclyn 'Chinkee' T. Clemente was recently awarded one of Manila's Best Dressed Young Women 2005. The awards dinner took place at the Forbes Town Center at the Fort Bonifacio Global City, led by Best Dressed chair and founder Karr Marin and 2005 honorary chair Dr. Mitzi Piad. For 9 years running, this prestigious event recognizes distinguished young men and women with style and substance. Chinkee is a Political Science graduate of the Ateneo de Manila University in Loyola Heights, Quezon City and is currently the business development manager of the family-run Belco Marketing Inc (BMI). Aside from her usual tasks in the company, she recently took over as managing director of BMI's Goldilocks Bakeshop franchise. Chinkee is shown at center with Sheila Romero and Carmela Laurin.

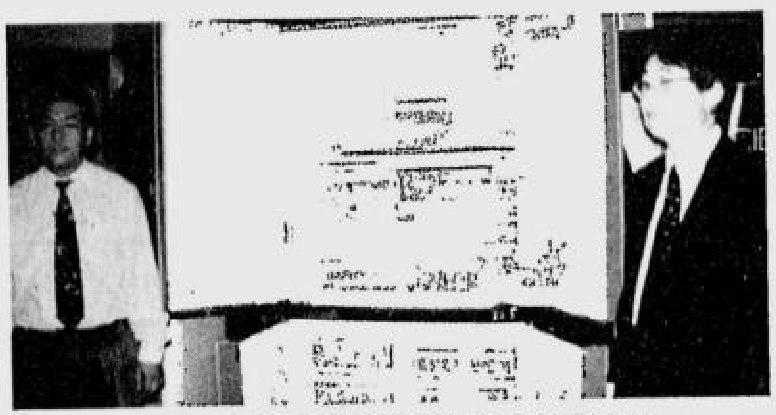
Drugstores Convention

PASCUAL

The Drugstores Association of the Philippines (DSAP) an association of drugstores owners nationwide with 2,500 members and composed of more than 5,000 drugstores nationwide through its president, Ma. Erlinda Pascual and convention chair Rodel Vizconde will be having its 10th DSAP National Convention on Sept. 6, 7 and 8 at Crowne Plaza Hotel, Ortigas Center. The theme of this convention is 'Expanding Borders'. The highlights of the convention is the opening ceremonies of more than 100 exhibit booths, top caliber speakers (Bo Sanchez is one), two nights of mini concerts by great performers, bigger and better 'deals', plenary sessions of very interesting topics about drugstore business and many more. Registration is on going for delegates and more exhibit booths are still available. For registration and booth registration, call 633-5253 or 631-4254 and look for Jof, Noel or Jane.

Conquer the majestic Mt. Pinatubo

Island Caravan offers up the Pinatubo challenge with its day tour program 'Majestic Climb.' Travelers have two choices for the program. The complete "Majestic Climb" program is inclusive of transfers from and to Manila, 4x4 vehicles for the mountain route, buffet lunch, guides, and travel insurance P3,000. The second option is that travelers drive their own vehicles up to Sta. Juliana, Tarlac before taking the 4x4 vehicles and packing their own lunch, for P2,500. This option is inclusive of guided tours, 4x4 vehicles for the mountain route, and travel insurance. The set date for the Majestic Climb event is May 20. Interested parties can call Island Caravan at 896-1910, 896-7569, and 896-1893.



SHARP ELECTRONICS LAUNCHES NEW TECH

Sharp, the no. 1 LCD TV producer in the world recently unveiled the Biggest Thing to hit the market at a press conference which took place at Dusit Hotel Dahlia and Camelia Ballrooms last April 21, 2006. Dubbed as the "Science of Sharp" press launch, sharp introduced its world-class selections of superior products. The unparalleled technology of the next generation TV: Sharp AQUOS 65-inch LCD TV; Sharp ES-AG750PF and ES-AG850PF Ag Ion Washing Machines; and Sharp's Double French door Plasmacluster refrigerator. Shown were Hiroshi Hatano (right) Sharp AVP & domestic sales division general manager and Peter Villanueva, assistant manager, product marketing showcase the Sharp Double French door Plasmacluster refrigerator.

BUSINESS

UBS bullish on RP

Swiss firm raises GDP projections

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PHILIPPINES—WITH ITS FALLING BOND yields, rising property prices and rebounding banking sector—has taken the path that led Turkey to an impressive economic boom, said UBS Securities Pte. Ltd.

In a study entitled "Philippines: From Buzz to Boom" dated May 10, UBS senior economist for Southeast Asia Christa Janjic noted that Turkey's successful fiscal adjustments and program to lower inflation had lowered interest rates and bank lending to the government, forcing banks to find new sources of growth.

Since 2003, credits to the private sector in Turkey nearly tripled while credits to households rose more than four times, perking up real investment by an average of 30 percent each year and private consumption by 9 percent, she noted.

She said the boom that followed was extraordinary by any standard: growth in gross domestic product more than doubled to 7.5 percent on average between 2003-2005; the equity market was up 440 percent since the beginning of 2003; and, the Turkish Lira had risen by 20 percent in real terms.

"In many respects, we think the Philippines today looks like Turkey at the beginning of 2003," Janjic said, upgrading GDP forecasts for the country to 5.2 percent this year and 5.8 percent next year, from earlier projections of 4.8 percent and 4.2 percent, respectively.

However, the economist said UBS did not expect the Philippine economy to grow at the same pace as Turkey as the starting point was different and the speed of adjustment "considerably slower."

"But Turkey still provides an important lesson for the Philippine economy as far as the dynamics of adjustment are concerned. And we don't see why the Philippines could not repeat some of the trends that we saw in Turkey," Janjic said.

"This is particularly true given ongoing micro developments—specifically, reforms in the banking sector and the cyclical recovery in the property market—which should provide the catalysts for stronger lending and, ultimately, economic growth," she said.

But Janjic said among the risks to this bullish scenario were a possible reversal in bond yields, sharply higher global prices that could jack up inflation and bond yields, a renewed blowout of the budget deficit and government borrowing and domestic political volatility.

To date, she said bank lending in the Philippines remained anemic, GDP growth driven almost exclusively by consumption, and investment still sluggish even when bond yields had already come off sharply.

The weak lending growth was attributed to high non-performing loans and assets, weak capital base and high lending rates despite falling Treasury bill and bond yields.

But she said "the building blocks may be coming together" as banks' bad assets had been falling sharply on the back of the Special Purpose Vehicle framework which provides fiscal incentives to the sale of problematic loans and foreclosed properties.

"The SPV is likely to be used more extensively going forward as real estate prices have started to rise. This implies that assets are more likely to clear because the gap between ask and bid prices is converging," Janjic said.

She added that bank recapitalization was taking off, with at least six banks intending to raise capital this year while ongoing consolidation in the banking sector was speeding up this process.

DOE to push use of autogas

By Abigail L. Ho

TO ENCOURAGE THE USE OF LIQUEFIED petroleum gas for transport, the Department of Energy is coming up with financing schemes to make it easier for small taxi operators to buy the equipment needed to use the alternative fuel.

"We're looking at how to provide assistance to small taxi operators, or those with just 10 units or less," DOE energy utilization and management bureau director Mario Marasigan said in a recent interview.

He said government financial institutions, such as Philippine Postal Savings Bank Inc., could be tapped to provide affordable loans to acquire the conversion kits that cost between P26,000 and P30,000 each.

Development Bank of the Philippines has a financing scheme for the autogas program, but it was not meant for small taxi operators but rather, original equipment manufacturers (OEMs), he said.

"We really want to help drivers and small operators because using autogas will save them about P1 a kilometer. That will be a big help to them, especially with the current high oil prices," he said.

He said it would take taxi drivers or operators about 86 days to recover their investment in autogas conversion kits.

The cost of these conversion kits was quite small compared with the potential savings that users could generate from shifting to autogas, he added.

Toyota has GM in its sights

TOKYO—DETROIT'S AILING AUTOMAKERS may be struggling to get out of reverse, but Toyota showed that it is just shifting into high gear.

Toyota, Japan's largest car maker, posted a 17.2 percent jump in net profit, to a record 1.37 trillion yen ($12.1 billion) in the fiscal year ended March 31.

It was its sixth consecutive year of record profit, enough to make it one of the world's most profitable manufacturers.

Toyota also released a vehicle sales forecast that analysts said shows it is on track to dethrone the floundering General Motors as the world's largest car maker, possibly as soon as this year.

Toyota said its entire group, including Daihatsu Motor and the truck maker Hino, will sell 8.45 million vehicles this fiscal year, 476,000 more than last year.

While GM has not released a forecast, many analysts expect it to drop below last year's 9.17 million vehicles.

GM, which has held the top position for 75 years, is struggling to recover from a $10.6-billion loss amid labor tension and soaring gasoline prices.

Its first quarter was profitable, but if it were to sell 8 percent fewer cars and Toyota exceeded its projections, then Toyota could become the world's largest automaker. *NYT*

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BMW 120i Executive	Titanium Silver	2005	8,411 kms	P1,880,000.00
BMW 316i (E36)	Calypso Red	1998	42,290 kms	P850,000.00
BMW 318i Lim.	Titanium Silver	2003	33,000 kms	P1,450,000.00
BMW 318i Executive *	Orient Blue	2004	31,311 kms	P1,850,000.00
BMW 318i M-Sport *	Topaz Blue	2004	25,708 kms	P1,700,000.00
BMW 323i *	Cosmos Black	1999	67,554 kms	P1,000,000.00
BMW 325i Executive *	Titanium Silver	2003	19,884 kms	P1,700,000.00
BMW 325i Executive *	Sienna Red	2004	33,454 kms	P1,850,000.00
BMW 325i Executive *	Black Sapphire	2004	35,000 kms	P1,850,000.00
BMW X5 3.0d Executive	Titanium Silver	2005	7,503 kms	P4,800,000.00
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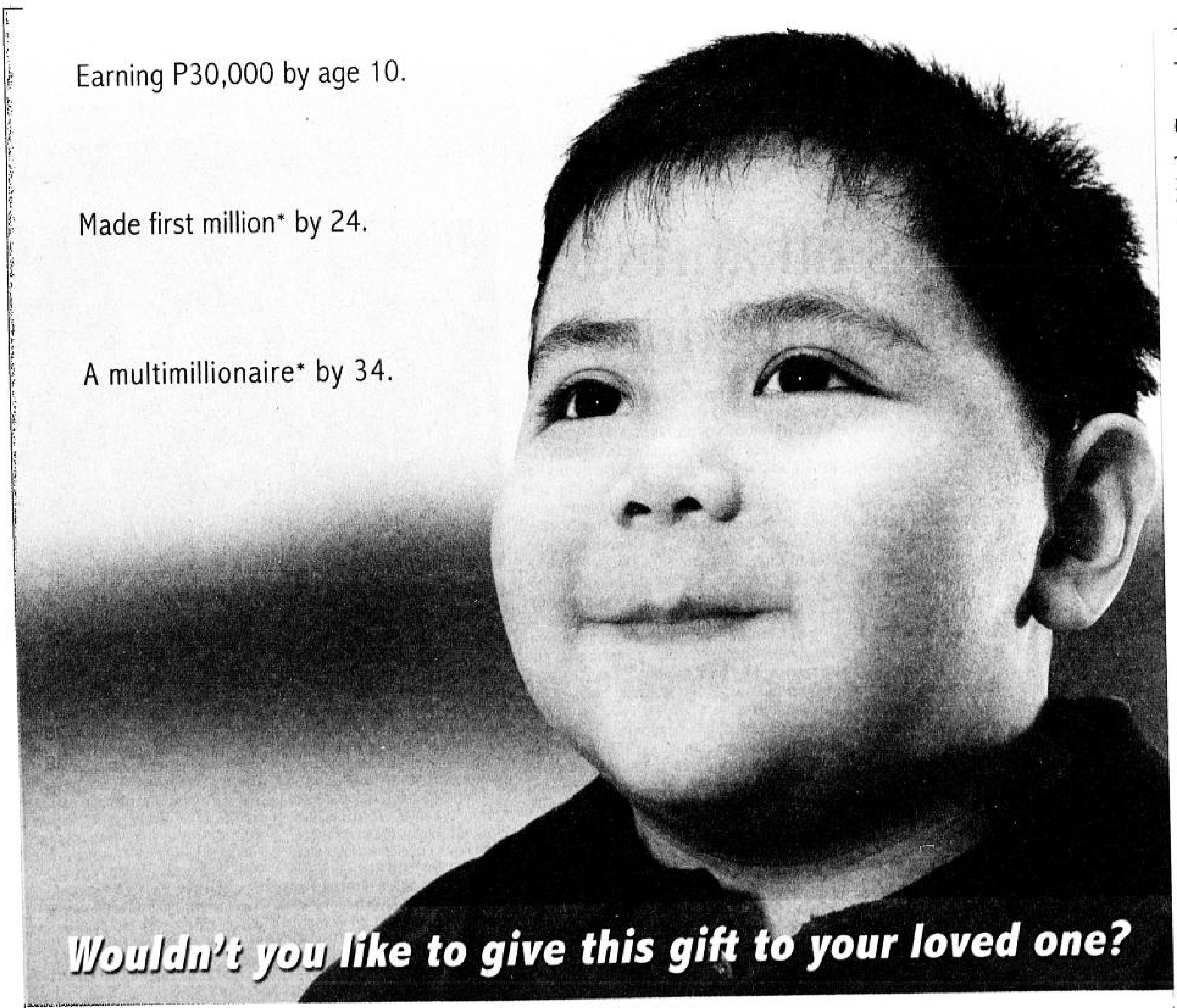
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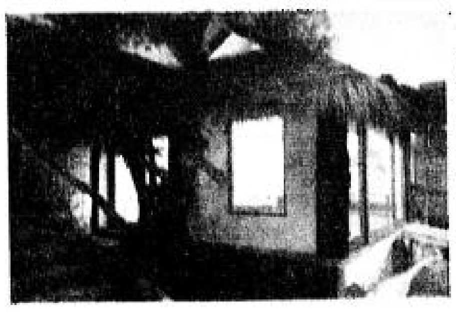
WHAT'S INSIDE



Center blends best of East, West

/B2-3

Herbal, organic products take center stage in expo

/B2-3

MARKETING Rx

Dr. Ned Roberto & Ardy Roberto

/B2-2

Marketing times are a-changing

Coping will mean a shift in strategies, leading experts say

THE IDEAS BEHIND MARKETING HAVE PERpetuated for as long we can remember, but this era of extreme progress tells us that times are changing, and so must our business approach. As such, Jos Ortega, chair of the National Marketing Conference (NMC), has crafted a remix of an old song.

According to him, the only way to keep up with the changes is to rethink the way we understand consumers and their needs.

Ortega identifies progressive marketing trends that will lead the way to stronger Filipino businesses going global.

He has designed the NMC and its theme, "All That Jazz: World-Class Innovations" in a way that will cultivate and instill fresh marketing developments into the local mindset.

Ortega names innovation as the first step to stirring the marketing movement.

It is no longer a matter of just research and development, nor is it a luxury by which market leaders get even further ahead, innovation is today the fundamental driver of business growth.

More than the basic product innovation, Ortega applies this principle to the bigger picture of an organization, and it begins in the boardroom.

He cites Ayala Land as the embodiment of innovation generating greater effectiveness, efficiency and productivity.

NMC speaker, Rene Almendras, president of Cebu Holdings Inc., will be expounding on "The Art of Innovation," showing how a unique vision starts with open-minded leaders and corporate transformation from the inside out.

MARKETING/ B2-2

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'What are the basic principles of launching a brand on the Internet?' —more marketing advice from Al Ries

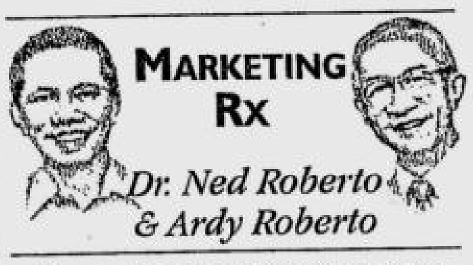
HERE'S MORE BRAND AND MARKETING ADvice from our guest columnist, best-selling marketing author and brand strategist, Al Ries. He is joined by his daughter, Laura Ries, co-author of "The 22 Immutable Laws of Branding" and "The Origin of Brands."

Q: Which marketing tools do you think will survive in the future? Do you expect a new form of marketing for the future?

A: We expect all marketing tools to survive. They just will be used in a different way. Companies will spend much more money on PR to launch brands. Then when brands have become established, they will switch to advertising. In fact, we don't predict much, if any, decline in advertising volume. Only a change in how advertising is being used.

Q: Are the advertising agencies of this world doing the right thing by focusing on creativity?

A: Sure, that's what clients want to buy. Creativity and the more the better. If we were an advertising agency, we would be doing exactly what agencies like TBWA/Chiat Day are doing. The problem is the client. Clients want to buy creativity so they get what they want.



Dr. Ned Roberto & Ardy Roberto

Our work has been with clients, trying to get them to see the role of advertising in its proper light. It's a slow process, but we do see changes.

Q: Do you think that PR and advertising should be combined in one integrated firm?

A: No, we don't. The reason is that the two disciplines involve different skills. It's like the military. Should the air force and the army work together? Sure, that's the way the war in Iraq was fought. Do we think the two services should be combined? No, they require different skills. An air force pilot would not necessarily make a good infantry company commander.

Q: How do you explain the success of Richard Branson and the Virgin Group of products?

A: One of our theories is short term vs long term. While a line extension is a loser in the long term, it can be a winner in the short term. But you can't measure success in the short term only. So we predict that Sir Richard will have problems in the long term.

Kids "R" Us and Baby Gap are line extensions of successful chains, what's wrong with capitalizing on the popularity of Toys "R" Us and the Gap?

Toys "R" Us has not done well lately. And one reason is that they have become unfocused with Kids "R" Us and Babies "R" Us. The other chains take precious time away from management, drain resources, and confuse consumers. Baby Gap has only been a modest success. However, I wonder if they would have been more successful if they had given the new store a different name. With a powerful baby name, the chain could have been a big winner.

Q: When can you line extend your own brand?

A: In general, you can line extend your own brand when your competitors are also line extended. Coca-Cola was able to successfully line extend their core brand to Diet Coke because Pepsi-Cola had done the same thing with Diet Pepsi. Anheuser-Busch was able to successfully line extend their core brand to Bud Light because Miller Brewing had done the same thing with Miller Lite. Whether or not you should line extend your brand is another matter. Launching a second brand can usually be more successful than a line extension.

Q: Can't you have a focus that is too narrow?

A: In theory, yes you can. For example, maybe left-handed tennis racquets or ice cream for dogs is too narrow a focus to have. But our experience finds that almost no companies have too narrow a focus. People tend to want to get into everything, which is why most companies are unfocused.

Q: Which are the basic principles for launching a brand on the Internet?

A: First, the site should have a separate and unique name, one that is also short, easy to spell and easy to pronounce. Second, the site should try to be the first in a new category. Amazon was first in books, for example. Third, the primary objective of the site should be to sell products or services, not to become a medium for advertising. Advertising will never become a major factor on the Internet. Why? Because the Internet is "interactive" and it's just too easy for consumers to turn off the advertising.

Our guest columnist, Al Ries, is one of the best known marketing strategists and authors in the world. He will be here in Manila on June 23 to do a one-day brand marketing conference together with his co-author and daughter, Laura Ries. Ries is the author of the international best sellers, "Positioning," "The 22 Immutable Laws of Marketing," (co-authored with Jack Trout), "The 22 Immutable Laws of Branding," "The Origin of Brands," and "The Fall of Advertising and The Rise of PR" (co-authored with Laura Ries). *MarketingRx is hosting Al Ries and his marketing advice column until July. If you have any questions for us or for Al Ries, send them to us at MarketingRx@pldtDSL.net or text us at 0919-314-5412. God bless!*

Republic of the Philippines
Province of Negros Oriental
CITY OF BAYAWAN
SPECIALIZED BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
www.bayawancity.gov.ph

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The City Government of Bayawan, through its Specialized Bids and Awards Committee, invites prospective suppliers to apply for eligibility and to bid on the following project:

Bid Number	Name of Project/s	Approved Budget for the Contract	Source of Fund
06-041B	Labor & materials for various fabrication and installation for the Construction of Integrated Bus Terminal	P8,293,297.27	General Fund

Project Location/Delivery Area : Bayawan City Warehouse
Contract Duration : 12 working days upon receipt of Purchase Order

The complete schedules of bidding activities are as follows:

ACTIVITY	DATE/S
Advertisement/Posting of the Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to bid	May 5, 2006
Issuance of Bid Documents	May 8, 2006
Pre-bid Conference	May 12, 2006 (1:00 p.m.)
Deadline for the submission & Opening of Eligibility Requirements (for Non-Accredited Suppliers) & LOI for Accredited Suppliers (Specialized BAC Office)	May 25, 2006 (2:00 p.m.)
Deadline/Opening of Bids (Specialized BAC Office)	May 26, 2006 (10:00 a.m.)

Complete sets of Eligibility Requirements and Bid Documents will be available for issuance at the Specialized BAC Office, 2nd Floor, City Hall Bldg., Bayawan City (Tel. (035) 531-0800) upon payment of the prescribed non-refundable fee.

Prospective Bidders shall duly accomplish eligibility requirements, technical and financial proposals and submit the same in 2 (two) separate sealed envelopes on or before the date indicated above.

The Specialized Bids and Awards Committee reserves the right to accept or reject all bids or part thereof, to waive formality therein or to accept such bids considered most advantageous to the City Government of Bayawan.

(Sgd.) **Atty. VICTORIANO D. ALABASTRO**
Chairman, Specialized Bids & Awards Committee

(PDI - May 5 & 12, 2006)

LAND BANK OF THE PHILIPPINES
Ang Bangkong May Damdaming-Bayan
1598 M. H. del Pilar corner Dr. J. Quintos Streets, Malate, Manila
Tel. Nos. 522-0000; 526-0100 connecting all departments

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Land Bank of the Philippines invites suppliers/manufacturers/distributors/contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the projects as stated below:

ITB No.		Item / Description	Approved Budget	Source of Funds
2006-046(2)	1,000 bdls.	Jacket for Savings Passbook with Logo, 5-5/8" x 4-1/8"	P 214,500.00	LBP Funds
	9,000 bdls.	Jacket for Savings Signature Card 5" x 7-1/2"	1,845,000.00	
	1,000 pcs.	Checkbook Jacket, 8-6/8" x 7"	13,500.00	
	3,000 bdls.	Plastic Jacket for ATM Card (Green)	855,000.00	
2006-045	1,200 units	Personal Computer	P 54,000,000.00	LBP Funds

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last two (2) years with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

Bidding for the above requirements is scheduled on **May 31, 2006** at 1:00 PM and pertinent Bid Documents may be obtained from the General Services Department, 25th Floor, LANDBANK Plaza, M. H. del Pilar corner Dr. Quintos Streets, Malate, Manila, **upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P1,000.00 for ITB No. 2006-046 (2) and P6,000.00 for ITB No. 2006-045.**

Interested suppliers are requested to attend the Pre-Bid Conference scheduled on **May 18, 2006, 2:00 p.m.** at the 25th Floor, Conference Room, LANDBANK Plaza, Malate, Manila.

All particulars relative to **Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post Qualification and Award of Contract** shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of **RA 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).**

LANDBANK reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder(s).

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

(PDI - May 5 & 12, 2006)

Republic of the Philippines
Province of Surigao del Sur
Municipality of Cantilan
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

May 3, 2006

INVITATION TO RE-BID

The Republic of the Philippines, through the Department of Education, has received an Official Development Assistance (ODA) Loan from the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) in the amount of P1.749 Million under Loan Agreement #PH-P200, towards the financing of **the Secondary Education Development and Improvement Project (SEDIP)** dated December 28, 1999. It is intended that part of the proceeds of this loan will be applied to eligible payments for the new construction of school buildings. In view hereof, the Government of the Philippines through the DepEd-SEDIP with the participation of the Local Government Unit (LGU) of the Municipality of Cantilan as implementor, hereinafter called the Agency, wishes to receive bids for the new construction of the following listed school buildings at **Cantilan National High School** located at Barangay Magasang, Cantilan, Surigao del Sur:

1) Two Storey Four Classroom Building with Science Laboratory, Faculty Room and Toilets
2) Two Storey Four Classroom Building with Library, Guidance Room and Toilets
3) Two Storey Six Classroom Building

Disbursement of the ODA loan by JBIC will be subject, in all respects, to the terms and conditions of the Loan Agreement, including the disbursement procedures and the "Guidelines for Procurement under JBIC ODA Loans." No. Party other than the Department of Education shall derive any rights from the Loan Agreement or have any claims to loan proceeds. The above Loan Agreement will cover only part of the project cost. As for the remaining portion, the Agency will take appropriate measures for finance. JBIC requires that bidders and contractors, as well as DepEd-SEDIP under contract funded with JBIC ODA loans and other Japanese ODA, observe the highest standard of ethics during the procurement and execution of such contracts. In pursuance of this policy, JBIC:

1) Will reject a proposal for award if it determines that the bidder recommended fore award has engaged in Corrupt or Fraudulent practices in competing for the contract in question;
2) Will recognize a contractor as ineligible, for a stated period of time, to be awarded a contract funded with JBIC ODA loans if it, at any time, determines that the contractor has engaged in corrupt or fraudulent practices in competing for, or in executing, another contract financed by JBIC ODA loans or other Japanese ODA.

Bidding is open to all Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (CAB) - registered contractors or joint venture contractor, with PCAB License at least Medium A classification on Building. Prospective Bidders/Contractors shall meet the minimum qualifying criteria of three (3) years construction experience. The schedule of activities for the above listed projects is indicated below:

- Submission of Letter of Intent - May 9-18, 2006
- Issuance of Bid Documents - May 15-18, 2006
- Pre-Bid Conference - May 19, 2006 - 2:00 PM
- Re-Bid Opening - May 30, 2006 - 2:00 PM

All particulars relative to eligibility, bidding, evaluation of Bids, award of Contract and enforcement hereof shall be governed by the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR-A of RA 9184) otherwise known as the Government procurement Reform Act."

The BAC reserves the right to reject any Application for Eligibility, or all bids, declare a failure of bidding or not award the contract if, among others, there is evidence of collusion, including any act which restricts, suppresses or defeats competition, waive any required formality therein, and to make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the government.

The BAC also assumes no obligation whatsoever to compensate or indemnity the bidder(s) for any expenses or loss that they may incur in the preparation of its bids, or any obligation to inform the affected bidder(s) on the ground(s) of BAC action, nor does it guarantee that an award will be made.

All communications should be addressed to the undersigned at the aforementioned address.

(Sgd.) **VICENTE A. MIRANDA**
Chairman
Bids and Awards Committee (BAC)
Cantilan, Surigao del Sur

(PDI - M 5 & 12, 2006)

Marketing times are a-changing

From page B2-1

Because creativity is so integral to innovation, companies must break down traditional barriers and introduce new facilities to cultivate ingenuity.

Ortega encourages leaders to allow ideas to grow because while it may appear unsightly as it sprouts, it may blossom quite beautifully.

Originality needs to be embraced by the CEOs.

Tony Fernandes, group president of AirAsia, speaking on "Building a Culture of Innovation," will discuss changing the standard, modifying pricing strategies and breaking down the corporate hierarchies that impair many companies today.

Another NMC guest, head of marketing Sandeep Khanna, hails from a company that has used innovation to dominate the mobile communications industry not only in the Philippines but also on a global scale.

Khanna will share the insights behind Nokia "Maintaining Market Leadership through Product Innovations" and highlight how important creativity is for a market that constantly evolves.

Lorenzo Tan, president and CEO of Sun Life of Canada, makes innovation accountable.

At the end of the day, it is the ROI that keeps a company going and Tan promotes "Driving Innovations with Fiscal Soundness" to ensure a practical side to an artistic vision. Furthering the idea of accountable creativity is Paul Roebuck, whose agency, BBDO Guerrero Ortega, was recognized as the most creative ad agency in the Philippines by Campaign Brief Asia.

He will highlight the importance of demonstrating strategic focus on delivering market results amidst winning awards.

In discussing marketing trends, Ortega believes that ideas work best when presented from the world view of the consumers.

As CEO of Brandlab Inc., he emphasizes understanding consumers as people, not unidimensional variables.

He is also pioneering the study of brand anthropology, which incorporates culture and behavior into marketing strategies.

In line with this, the NMC presents "New Research Techniques in an Innovative Environment" with managing partner of Good Thinking, Issa Barron.

Although most techniques have been tried and tested, this age requires new methods that are aligned with modern day problems.

Beyond traditional marketing, innovations are playing a major role in corporate social responsibility.

Alexandra Prieto-Romualdez of the Philippine Daily Inquirer will be discussing the value of partnerships that benefit the community.

Community building then is not an option for spare time and funds but is a central part of a company's brand and business plan.

Finally, there is the evolving role of brands beyond just a marketing tool.

Ortega sees brand building as the force behind Filipino companies making it international.

With this, Martin Roll, president of VentureRepublic, a strategic advisor on branding excellence, will expound on "Asian Brand Strategy: A New Boardroom Paradigm."

This means elevating discussions on the brand from the marketing department to the board level as it drives the whole company.

In the same way, Joerg Breuer, president of BMW Philippines, delves into "The Brand as the Central Operating Principle" and stresses that every company decision must be driven by the values of the brand.

From design to employees, from sales to engineering, its vision should be clearly manifested.

The NMC will feature Abbott Philippines, a pharmaceutical industry leader, directed by a leader who is also the brand pioneer, Edwin Feist.

As president of Abbott Philippines and regional director for Philippines, Australia and New Zealand, Feist pilots the creative process of brand building, emphasizing that innovation starts in the boardroom.

Johnlu Koa, the founder and CEO of French Baker, demonstrates the importance of making day-to-day decisions based on a precise and purposeful vision.

The NMC will be held from May 18-19, 2006 at the Hotel Philippine Plaza. Regular rate of P8,500. Call 634-4890, 634-5722 or 6361451 for inquiries. You can also email philmarketing@pldtdsl.net or visit www.philmarketing.com.ph for more information.

DAVAO CITY WATER DISTRICT
J.P. Laurel Ave., Davao City
Tel. # 221-9400

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

1. The Davao City Water District, with the Approved Budget for 2006 intends to apply the sum *(see schedule under 2)* being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under contracts as listed below. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at bid opening.
2. The Davao City Water District now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for the following:

PACKAGE	DESCRIPTION	Approved Budget for the Contract	BID SECURITY (1% OF ABC)	COST OF BID DOCUMENTS
1	15,600 PCS - 1/2" WATER METERS	P 19,500,000.00	195,000.00	5,000.00
2	1 UNIT - AIR COMPRESSOR with 1 UNIT PAVEMENT BREAKER	900,000.00	9,000.00	1,000.00
3	12 UNITS STAINLESS STEEL WATER STORAGE TANK	533,997.00	5,340.00	1,000.00
4	12 UNITS - VARIOUS SIZES OF BUTTERFLY VALVE	636,900.00	6,369.00	1,000.00
5	3 UNITS VIBRATORY RAMMER	391,000.00	3,910.00	1,000.00
6	5 UNITS - CONDUCTIVITY / TDS/ SALINITY METER	400,000.00	4,000.00	1,000.00
7	4 UNITS - ELECTRIC ACTUATORS	440,000.00	4,400.00	1,000.00

The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.

3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belongings to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.
4. Interested Bidders may obtain further information from *Davao City Water District* and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 8:00 a.m. up to 5:00 p.m.
5. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of non refundable fee in the amount *(stated in item no.2)*. The method of payment will be on Cash Basis. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.
6. The *Davao City Water District* will hold a Pre-Bid Conference to all interested parties on ***May 26, 2006 at 9:00 o'clock A.M.*** at ***DCWD BAC-A Secretariat Office, J.P. Laurel Ave., Bajada, Davao City.***
7. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before the *bidding scheduled time and date at 9:00 o'clock A.M.* All Bids must be accompanied by a ***Bid Security*** in the form of *Cash or Manager's check* in the amount *(stated in item no.2)*. Late Bids shall not be accepted.
8. Bid opening shall be at *the* ***DCWD BAC-A Secretariat Office, J.P. Laurel Ave., Bajada, Davao City*** *on the following schedule:*

PACKAGE No.	BIDDING SCHEDULE, TIME & DATE
1	June 7, 2006 @ 9:00 A.M.
2 & 3	June 7, 2006 @ 2:00 P.M.
4 & 5	June 8, 2006 @ 9:00 A.M.
6 & 7	June 8, 2006 @ 2:00 P.M.

Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below.

9. The *Davao City Water District* reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Davao City Water District
BAC-A
J.P. Laurel Ave., Bajada, Davao City
Tel. No. : 221-9400 (8000)
E-mail add : dcwd@davao-water.gov.ph
Fax No. : 224-5392
Website : www.davao-water.gov.ph

(PDI -May 5 & 12, 2006)

BIO-SEARCH gathers the country's top micro, small, and medium entrepreneurs and give them focused exposure.

Herbal, organic products take center stage in expo

THE TOP EXPORTERS OF EVerything natural, herbal and organic are coming together to showcase their products at the Bio-Search, the country's leading health and wellness show, organized by the Center for Trade Exhibitions and Missions.

During the three-day gathering that runs until May 14, Bio-Search's trade buyers and the general public will be treated to various displays of organically certified natural food and beverages, plant-based skin care and beauty products, aromatherapy and essential oils formulated for safe use.

Bio-Search will also showcase herbal food supplements producers and health spa and fitness facilities that will re-acquaint the public with various healing and therapeutic methods, such as the hilot technique.

The show's various offerings for the past decade has identified it as a venue of choice by clean and green or environment-friendly enthusiasts.

This year's settings, for example, have been inspired by a back-to-basics theme that revolves around the significance of celebrating life through proper and careful nurturing of the self, positive energies, and relationship with those around us.

A prime location of highland teas and coffee blends sourced from the northern and southern Luzon provinces will be featured in the Philippine Herbal Beverage Setting.

Bote Central Inc.—the quality manufacturer of Arengga Vinegar—leads the presentation of Rediscovering Vinegar, an informative exhibit that highlights the flavors of different vinegar condiment sourced from cane, palm and nipa.

The Spa Association will present the local healing, restorative and therapeutic modality popular with traditional and alternative medicine, the hilot massage.

It will be demonstrated back-to-back with other different types of massage.

Complementing this is a Natural and Organic Tableau by the Organic Producers Trade Association (Opta) where fresh fruits and vegetables will be available.

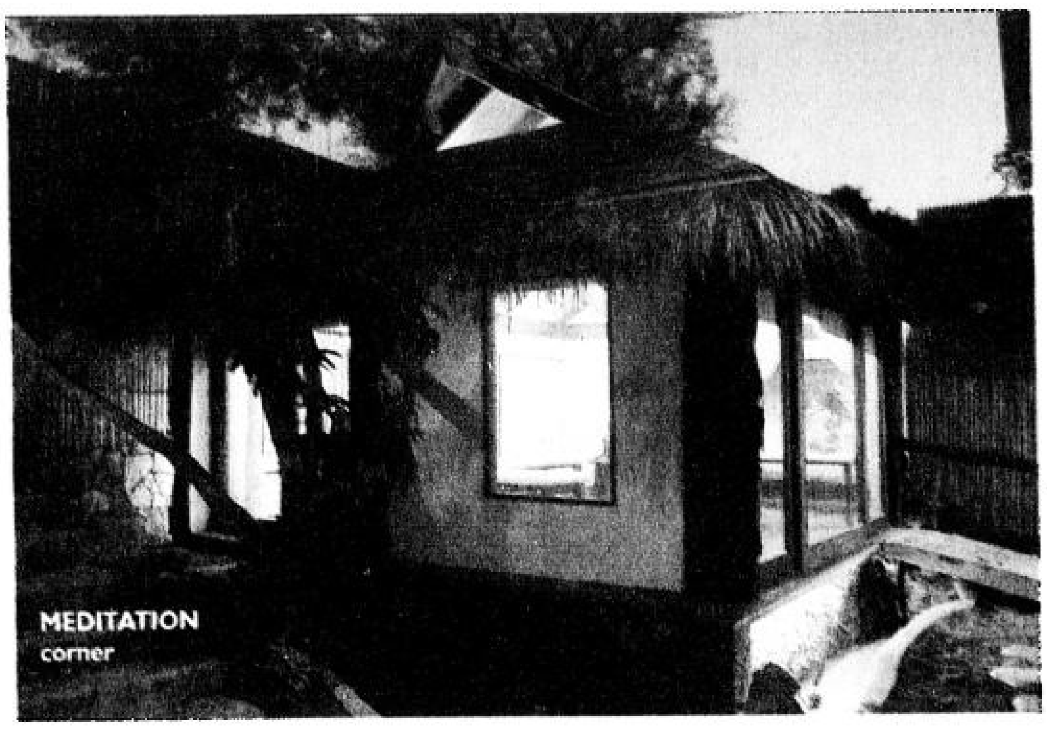
Aside from the retailing and order taking during the show, visitors will be treated to company presentations and lecture forums led by experts and key industry players.

Students, particularly, look to Bio-Search as another bastion of learning, where they discover various herbs and medicinal plants transformed into nutraceuticals (food supplements), phytopharmaceuticals (natural personal skin care), and cosmeceuticals (plant-based beauty products).

Some of these have found their way to the supermarkets and drugstores.

Center blends best of East, West

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao



MEDITATION corner

THE PHILIPPINES IS SUCCESSFULLY WORKing its way into the moneyed tourists' list of places to go to—and investors are smelling an opportunity.

RENU Gidoomal, Amezcua general manager

This explains the construction boom in the hotel industry, particularly in the beach destinations of Cebu and Boracay, in anticipation of the arrival of as many as five million tourists a year by 2010.

The rosy projections on the tourism industry were also what encouraged the group of Singaporean and Filipino investors to put up Amezcua Wellness Centre, a unique wellness destination, along Katipunan Avenue in White Plains, Quezon City.

Amezcua general manager Renu Gidoomal tells the INQUIRER that Amezcua was set up to take advantage of the expected growth in medical tourism in the Philippines.

Medical tourism means getting foreigners to come to the Philippines to have operations done, submit themselves to a thorough executive check-up, or just enjoy spa treatments with that distinct Filipino brand of service.

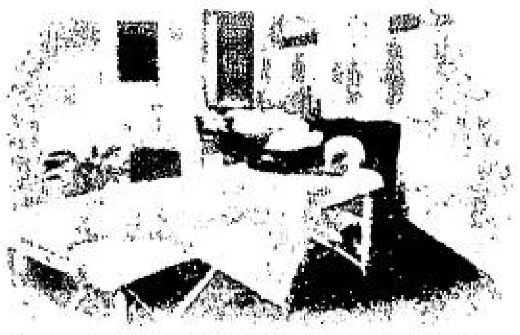
This kind of tourism has done wonders for Thailand and India, which have projected themselves as prime destinations for wellness and relaxation, and Amezcua feels that the Philippines can and should be able to do the same.

"Medical tourism is a growing trend, and the government has put in place policies that are good for the industry," she says.

Gidoomal cites the Department of Tourism's aggressive marketing of the country's medical and spa facilities in foreign markets, particularly in China, Korea and Japan.

She says it also helps that the spa and wellness industry in the Philippines is organized and working as a group to maintain high standards and to keep tourists coming in and leaving satisfied.

Amezcua, said to be the first urban medi-spa in the Philippines, hopes to get a big slice of the market by positioning itself as a one-stop destination for spa treatments and alternative health care, which is in demand in more economically advanced countries.



AMEZCUA boasts of a spacious 1,200-sq.m., carefully designed floor space and state-of-the-art equipment

Clients can choose from a varied list of programs for holistic healing experience: acupuncture, live blood analysis, body terrain analysis, colonic hydrotherapy and various herbal wraps.

Treatments that Amezcua claims will restore the body and spirit include the Green Coffee Cocoon, to facilitate the elimination of impurities, and the Sabai Stone Massage and signature AromaMoor treatment to combat the effects of fatigue and stress.

The country's traditional acupressure treatment, Dagdagay, to help boost the immune system, also figures prominently on Amezcua's menu of services.

Because the center believes that true health comes from a balance of body, mind, emotion and spirit, Amezcua also offers yoga, pilatis and T'ai Chi classes, as well as a wet/dry sauna to relax the body.

Amezcua is built on its so-called 3H formula, which stands for hospitality, hotel and hospital.

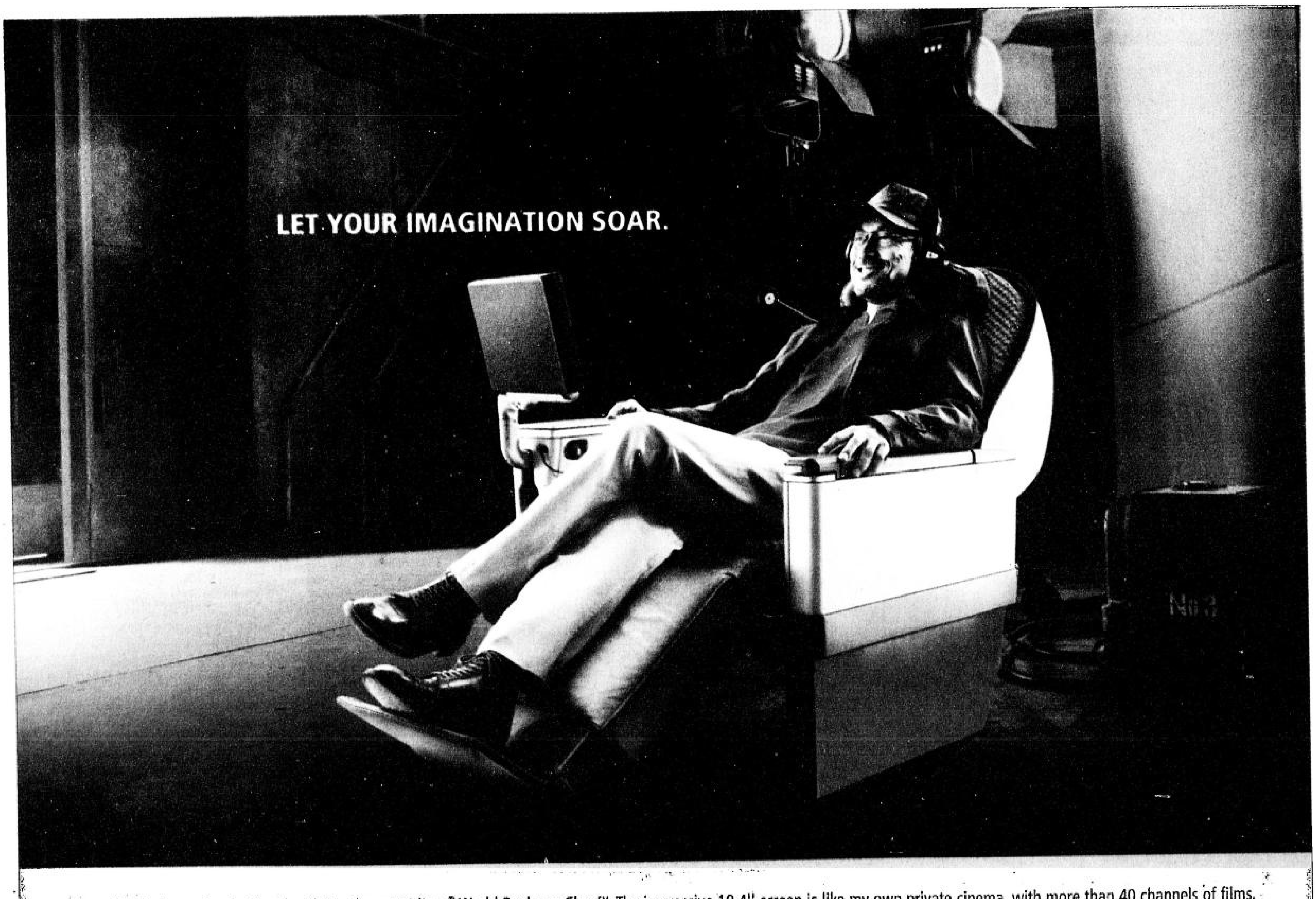
Hospitality, Gidoomal says, means that the clients will enjoy a high level of comfort. Hotel stands for service excellence and the accompanying amenities and design, while hospital means having a staff of qualified and licensed practitioners to answer clients' medical needs.

"We want to bring what hotels and hospitals have in one place, to be truly a spa and wellness destination," she says.

Gidoomal says places like Amezcua are sprouting all over the world because people truly love to be pampered, even those who are sick, so why not extend the spa experience to the medical field.

Amezcua opened in February this year and the patronage has been encouraging enough to convince investors led by Quest Vacation International Singapore to eventually look at putting up more facilities.

In the meantime, Gidoomal says Amezcua is hoping to link with travel agencies from the United States, Europe, the United Kingdom and neighboring Asian countries to bring even more tourists to the Philippines, and to Amezcua.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GRACE D. Limjap

What the rich want, they get

Card firm introduces concierge services to pamper members

By Margie Quimpo-Espino

HERE'S AN INTERESTING FACT ABOUT Manila's rich: In less than a year, the affluent cardholders of American Express spent about a quarter of a billion pesos for retail (shopping) and travel related (more shopping and dining out) expenses.

With such spending power, businesses have no choice but to deal with the idiosyncrasies of the well to do, which is why Amex introduced its concierge services.

> Affluent members are willing to pay for their requests

Similar to the concierge desk of top hotels, Amex is there to fulfill its cardholders' requests.

One cardholder, for instance, asked the concierge to look for a yacht to bring his guests to his weekend house by the beach and celebrate his birthday.

Another cardholder asked for peonies to give to a special someone.

Peonies are round flowers that are usually pink, crimson or white in color, and are not available locally.

Amex imported a bunch.

Of course, all these come with a fee, but if the client is willing to pay ...

American Express peso platinum card marketing head Grace D. Limjap says the firm has a 15-year history in serving the rich.

Amex estimates that there are 47 million affluent individuals in the Asia-Pacific, and the number will likely increase to 53 million by 2008.

Share of rich individuals

"The Philippine market has its share of affluent individuals. The American Express peso platinum card has been a beneficiary of the buying power of the affluent as shown by the number of membership rewards (MR) points earned by our card members," she says.

"Within a few months from launch, our card members earned a total of over 100 million MR points. Card members must spend P45 to earn one point. While we had double MR points until December 2005, the number of MR points earned will show you how our card members have spent in a relatively short period of time," Limjap adds.

American Express recently conducted a study of the rich in Singapore called "Inside the Affluent Space."

The study shows that "the affluent no longer define themselves just by what they own, but also by what they have experienced," Amex says in a statement.

Limjap says, "while the study was done in Singapore, our market as well as the other markets in the region do benefit from this kind of initiative as we all serve the affluent in our respective markets."

"We can say that the affluent have common behaviors regardless of geographic or racial affiliations. Like for the Philippines, this helps us come up with promotions or offers as well as benefits that suits our peso platinum card members' needs," she adds.

"It's clear that luxury is moving from the tangible to the intangible," observes Ian Fish, president of American Express Bank Philippines.

"The intangibles focus on the experiential and emotional value of an event such as a trip to an exotic destination or a dinner specially prepared by a well-known chef. If the experience makes a good story, it's even better," he says.

Wealthy people crave experience

At the same time, the study points out that the wealthy desire to be freed from the complexity of making luxury choices.

The study is based on conversations with affluent individuals as well as prestige product and service providers.

According to the White Paper on Inside the Affluent Space, there is a continued unprecedented growth in wealth creation and tremendous opportunities for brands, products and services that cater to the affluent.

In 2005, 42 million of the rich individuals with liquid assets of between $50,000 and $300,000 lived in the Asia-Pacific region.

The White Paper highlighted that businesses succeed and grow based on how they connect with their customers, how they deliver on their promise, and how they innovate with an understanding of not what's "now" but rather by knowing "what's" next.

The main points of the study, conducted last March, is the New Ritual of Luxury:

"Talk-value" is the new luxury. Limjap says this means that affluent individuals are no longer just seeking to purchase luxury items. They are also seeking unique experiences that make them feel special.

In the Philippines, for instance, members spend a lot on retail as well as travel to exotic as well as popular destinations.

This explains the popularity of personal chefs who will create meals in your home and the thrill of eating a P1,500 meal in a special Tagaytay restaurant with extraordinary landscaping.

Passion has no price. This means that the appetite to fulfill passions—be it a meal from a Michelin rated chef or a Bose sound system—is growing. And affluent consumers will spend to fulfill those passions.

The new definition of exclusive is "Made Just for Me!" Affluent consumers are seeking to assert their sense of self and being special through items and experiences made just for them. This explains the popularity of customized bags which feature favorite photos of the owner.

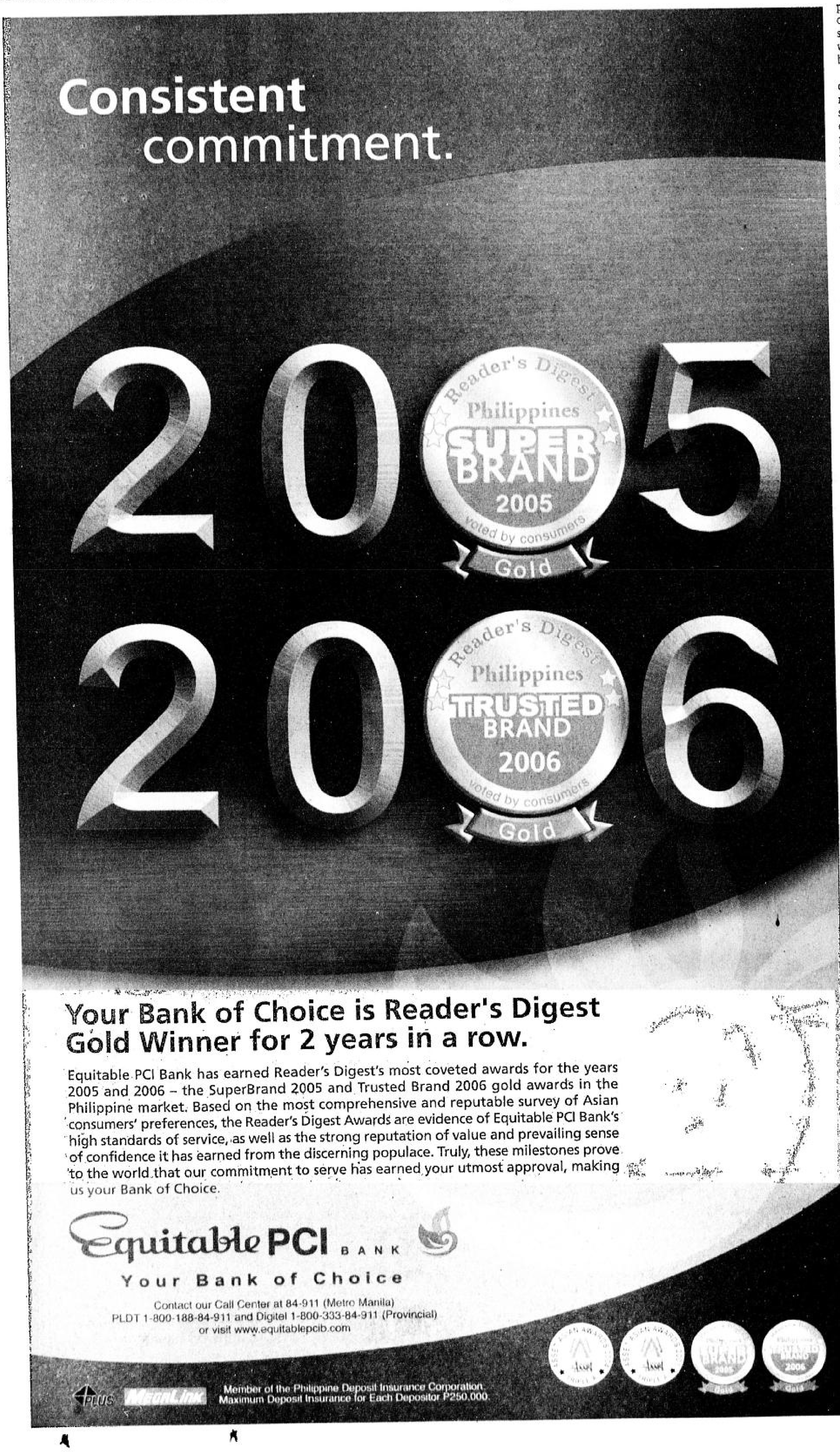
The "ordinary" is precious, too. Affluent consumers also enjoy ordinary pleasures.

It is not beyond them to eat hawker's fare or in the Philippines—to exchange rewards points for SM gift vouchers.

Privilege is not having to think. Affluent consumers don't want to have to make too many choices. They have money to spend but little time to waste having to choose from among so many options.

They appreciate merchants and companies that do the thinking for them.

"This is why we make it a point to provide experiential events and benefits that our card members appreciate e.g. Flamenco classes and pottery sessions," says Limjap.



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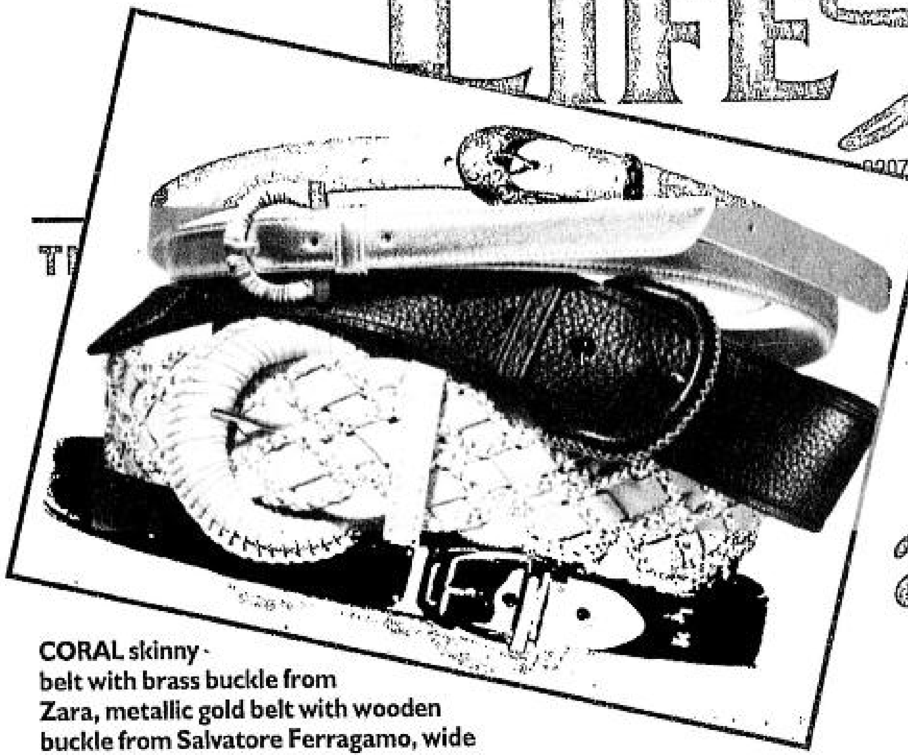

CORAL skinny belt with brass buckle from Zara, metallic gold belt with wooden buckle from Salvatore Ferragamo, wide black leather belt from Prada, weave belt from Zara, navy patent belt with gold buckle from Gucci PHOTO COURTESY OF METRO MAGAZINE

Belts are the way to go

LIFE-STYLED

Thelma Sioson San Juan

FOR A CHANGE, HERE'S fashion we all can use. By we, I mean women whose bodies are real, whose bulges are too real they're almost surreal, women who don't stand model-tall and don't have nubile navels.

These are women who, if they must get into a gown, buy, almost instinctively, waist- or abs-flattening underwear called Flexees. And, they're so up to date with the trendiest diet but get too lazy to work on their "abs" regularly in the gym.

In short, the real women who must constitute 80-90 percent of the clothes market.

The good news is many of the current and upcoming trends are good for hiding the "Pinay puson" (must be in our genes).

Foremost of these is the belt, which is back in a big way. It's all over Vogue and the glossies—belts in all kinds of design, size and material: leather, woven fabric, plastic, you name it—from leather belts to cummerbands. They are thin, medium-width, and wide. The "it" belt is wide and big, where your eye gets drawn to the buckle. While in previous seasons the neckpiece was the design statement, today it's the buckle which is the cutting edge.

Such style-statement belts draw the eye away from the woman's big hips and toward the waist. But then the waist is cinched, thus controlled and made to look narrower.

Unlike in previous seasons where the belt hugged the hips, today's belt is at the waist. So it's back to where it should be, but not so tight it suffocates. For a while there you thought the low-rise jeans or skirt would last until the 22nd century, and the earth would belong to only those with the perfect navel to bare. We've been "midribbed" to death, and everything was focused on the hips.

The focus now has moved from the hips to the waist. You can go for a wide belt that holds your waist just enough to make it seem slimmer and give it shape, and in the process tightening up your "puson" as well.

However, unlike in previous "belted" eras, today's belt-up look is not structured and constricting. It's softer. The belt can only clinch the put-together look—like a tank underneath a cotton top or a jacket. The belt is used to unify the mix-match coordinates. (As always, your look shouldn't be so put-together as to seem contrived and boring.)

The belt goes well with a dress, jacket/pants, pencil skirt, full skirt—anything you want to look "waisted."

The other trend that suits women who have something to hide—and which woman doesn't?—is, as you know by now, the empire cut

BELTS/ C4

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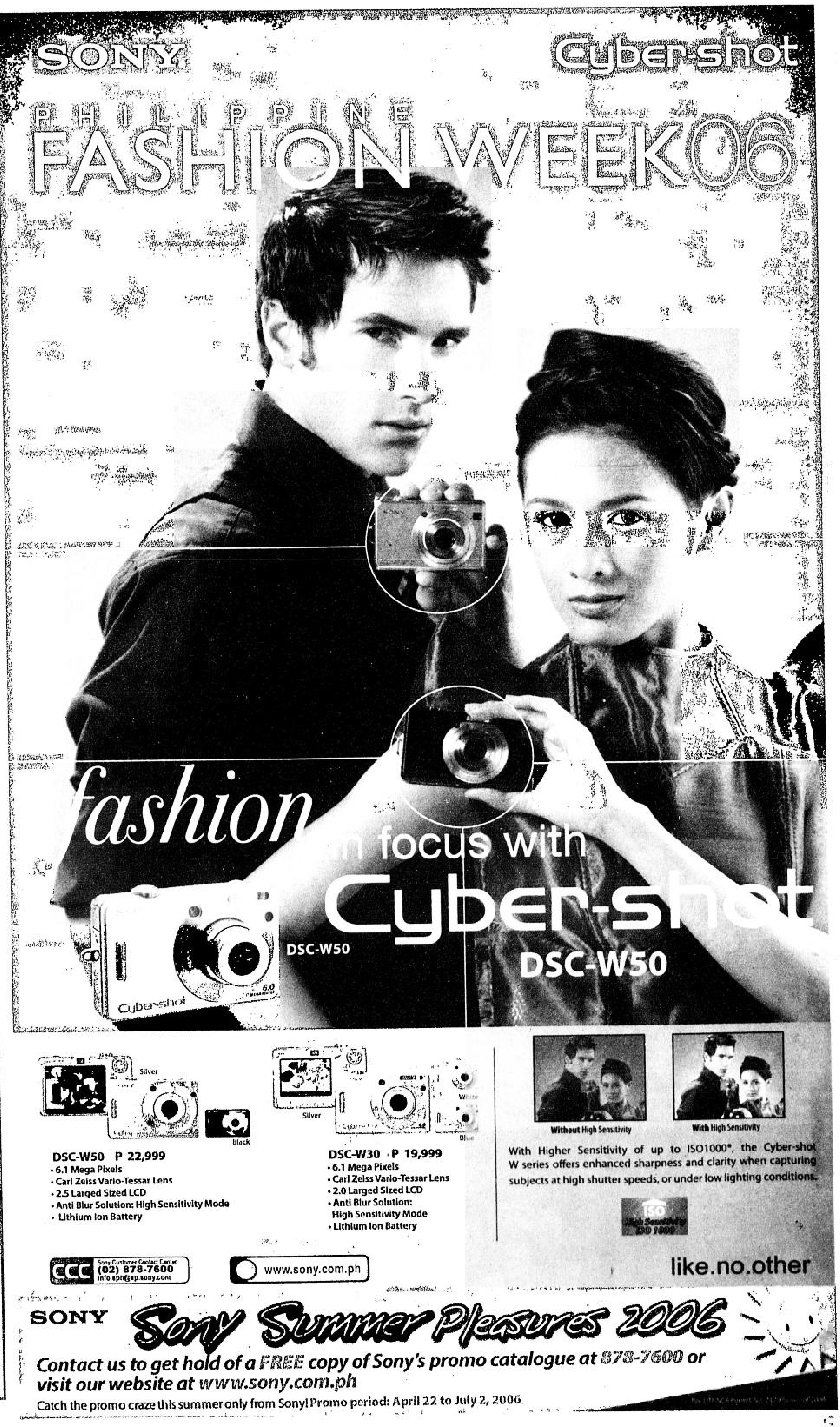

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VIOLINIST Gil Lopez Kabayao, Sen. Mar Roxas; the affair's host, TV personality, Korina Sanchez; Gemma Cruz Araneta

DR. CHRISTINE Sarabia-Heras, Iloilo's popular Mayor Jerry Trenas, guest of honor Luli Arroyo, Salvador Sarabia Jr., Dr. Sandra Sarabia-Gomez, Patricia S. Espinosa and Federico Sarabia III

DR. Vivian Sarabia, former Negros Gov. Bitay Lacson, Supreme Court Justice Antonio Carpio, Tina Sarabia Lacson and Ruth Carpio

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BUSINESSMEN pals Gem Chua and Lance Go

MAN of the hour. Whiz DJ Kaskade rocks the Coconut Place in Bora.

VANESSA Mayuga and Popsie Elgir

GEOFF Rodriguez and Tisha Silang

ROSALIA Sarabia-Brillantes, Fred Sarabia, Dr. Christine Sarabia-Heras, Eddie Roces, Francisco Sarabia and Pete Roa (seated)

SYLVIA Heras; Antonietta Chan and mother, Doña Florence Chan; Maryann Ansaldo Chan and Maricris Heras

JOE Fores, Charlie Carmona and his favorite gal, adorable Leana Farrales; (standing) Mulsy Regala and Dan Morales

OUR *PALANGGA* Ethel Timbol, Mons Tantoco, Chit Lijauco, PAL's Babsie Aragon and Ria Domingo

AJ Pangilinan of Adreflex and Felix Cruz of PAL

SMART'S Maureen Palomares, Cecille Gregorio with PAL's Kit Javier

SMART'S Ricky Isla and Jane Basas, with Adreflex's Clang Garcia

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by **Alex Van Hagen** using **Kodak** EasyShare system

IT WAS THE NIGHT WHEN THE SWEET-sounding Ilonggo was totally spoken: the grand launching of the renowned Sarabia Optical Centennial exhibit at the Ayala Museum, *palanggas*.

Dashing in a bit late, *moi* immediately said "hi" to the First Daughter, brilliant **Luli Arroyo** (who is part Ilonggo, from daddy's side), who had just led the ribbon-cutting to the exhibit featuring the memorabilia of Dr. **Federico Sarabia Sr.**, the first Filipino optometrist who opened the first Sarabia Optical in Iloilo in 1906.

In the impressive candle-lighting ceremony, second- and third-generation clients of Sarabia Optical represented their forebears. The clients included **Gil Lopez-Kabayao**, grandson of Don **Gil Lopez**, who was a patient of Dr. Sarabia from 1906-1915. He was accompanied by Dr. **Melinda Sarabia-Morales.**

Statuesque former beauty queen **Gemma Cruz-Araneta**, a descendant of the Rizal family, lit the candle in memory of Doña **Trinidad Rizal**, a client in the Escolta clinic from 1916-1925 and whose Sarabia eyeglass case was exhibited at the Rizal Museum in Fort Santiago. Dr. **Freddie Sarabia** escorted her.

In 1926-1935, Dr. Sarabia's clients included President **Manuel L. Quezon**, who appointed him chair of the Board of Optometry in the Philippines.

President Manuel Roxas was also a client. He would bring his son, **Gerry Roxas**, to the clinic. His grandson, Sen. **Mar Roxas**, lit the candle for his forebears. Dr. **Vivian Sarabia** accompanied him.

Dr. Sarabia's son, **Salvador Sarabia**, and **Eva Macaraeg**, daughter of engineer **Juan Macaraeg** and the former first lady, were close pals.

Federico Sarabia Jr. became chair of the Board of Optometry. Ditto with his sister, Dr. **Salvacion Sarabia**.

Meanwhile, Dr. **Manuel Sarabia** developed a friendship with Don **Chino Roces**, the publisher.

Doña **Florence Chan** lit the candle with Dr. **Mike Sarabia** as escort.

Dr. **Francis Sarabia Ong**, the youngest optometrist of the Sarabia *famille*, lit the candle in behalf of the fourth generation

Naturellement, apres the presentation the happening got on a roll. Spotted was top Iloilo socialite Dr. **Sandra Sarabia Gomez**, the woman behind the five-star Sarabia Manor Hotel in Iloilo. She was with her daughter, attractive **Pauline S.**, *palanggas*.

My *palangga*, the adorable Dr. Vivian Sarabia, and her sister, **Christine Sarabia-Heras**, who is married to **Quinito Heras**, guided Luli around the exhibit, explaining the memorabilia to her. I was completely overwhelmed to see fourth-generation Sarabia optometrists! May their tribe increase.

Dance gig

It was the hottest happening of the hot week, *palanggas*—Dunhill's renowned gig at the sprawling garden and poolside of the Coconut Palace on Roxas Boulevard.

A massive stage, a DJ booth and a vinyl-covered dance floor surrounded by the most advanced lights and sounds installations, make for a truly unique outdoor dance experience. Manille cosmopolites and party shakers rocked to the beat of Superfly DJ **Karl Ty**, thanks to international superstar DJ and producer **Kaskade**, *palanggas*.

"Dunhill has always espoused perfection, from the stringent procedures in the creation of each and every tobacco product, and this carries over into all of its activities," explained public relations officer **G.P. Reyes**, but who else.

This "classics remix" bash started off with a special set by renowned percussion group, Pinikpikan, whose traditional rhythms, raw chants, wild percussions and flaming rock, complemented the ethnic-electronic beats of the DJ.

Ballet Manila then unleashed its captivating moves to the charged beats of the Kaskade anthem, "Stepping Out!"

Then Kaskade, the musical personification of Dunhill's "perfectionist philosophy," took control of the booth, sending the crowd into a wild frenzy. He played chart-toppers such as "It's You, It's Me" and "Empty Streets," and others. "Where I Am" was his first track, played amid glorious fireworks.

An awesome three-hour set played on as a variety of Smirnoff specialty drinks at the VIP lounge kept pouring and a selection of the fine Dunhill cigarettes were distributed.

Little did the partygoers know that the Kaskade Party would continue three days later at Club Paraw in swinging Boracay, *palanggas*.

Check this out, more Dunhill Dimensions and Superfly events will be hitting our shores sooner than soon, *palanggas*.

Smart miles

Hey, *palanggas*, did you know that our pal Philippine Airlines' jetset pack, the Mabuhay Miles members, can now earn super extra miles through Smart Communications' International Services.

Mabuhay Miles has partnered with Smart Communications for "Come Fly with Smart," a program for individual account subscribers of Smart Infinity, Smart Gold and Addict, *palanggas*.

From April 2, 2006-March 31, 2007, Smart postpaid subscribers can earn one precious mile for every three minutes of IDD call, every three international SMS or for every MMS sent, or for every P300 billed usage for roaming services. Starting May 1, subscribers may also earn one mile for every P60 billed usage for WAP or Internet browsing.

It gets even better, dahlings, because from April 2, 2006-Jan. 31, 2007, subscribers who get new Smart postpaid plans and those renewing their current Smart postpaid plans may earn enough miles to go on an awesome round-trip vacation to as far as Sydney or Melbourne, Australia, would you believe!

"We're staying to our commitment to offer nothing but the best service to our customers," said **Menardo Jimenez**, Smart Wireless consumer division head.

"We are certain both our Mabuhay Miles members and Smart subscribers will appreciate the benefits and rewards that this partnership offers them," said **Henry So Uy**, Mabuhay Miles vice president.

HENRY So Uy, PAL's executive vice president for commercial group; Butch Jimenez, Smart's head for wireless consumer division; Jaime Bautista, PAL president and COO; Joanne Rae Ramirez of People Asia; and Mon Isberto (standing), Smart's head of public affairs

MABUHAY Miles team. Mike Dizon, Peggy Calawod, Mary Ann Timbol, Eileen Galindez and Margie Mia

Beach stunners

FASHIONABLE FLORALS. Sun 'n' Sand floral bikini, sunglasses by Hawaiian sun, charm and beaded bracelets by RDS

MODEL KATHY MOYA
PHOTOS PAT DY
MAKEUP LALA FLORES
STYLING MIREN MENDOZA

SEEIN' SPORTS. Sun 'n' Sand polka-dot keyhole bikini, crochet scraft and beaded necklace

BEFORE HEADING TO THE BEACH THIS summer, check out Robinsons Department Store (RDS) for stylish bathing suits and other swim basics.

Any "body" can look good on the beach with the right style. The secret to this is finding an affordable swimwear that flatters your body type, complements your skintone and reflects your fashion personality.

For instance, monokinis and classic maillöts with elegant prints and patterns that distract the eyes away from the swimsuit provide tummy control and are great alternatives for round-shaped figures. Girls with small busts should opt for suits that provides subtle enhancement. An enticing two-piece halter-style swimwear is an excellent choice for slim-skinny types.

Tankinis or cleverly cropped thick strap tank tops and a classic bikini bottoms are best for those with long torsos and who need bust support without sacrificing style and flexibility. This is a flattering two-piece wonder that can be worn in or out of the water, while swimming, jogging or playing beach volleyball.

Got an hourglass figure? Your much sought-after shape allows you to wear any type of swimwear. So why don't you slide into a chic cutout or a bustier bandeau and celebrate your features by drawing attention to your best assets?

More than swimwear are sunglasses, accessories, wraps and cover-ups that keep you protected under the sun in style. Sarongs, shawls or sheer tunics are smart additions to your already trendy getup.

All these are available at RDS, which branches in Robinsons Malls, Waltermart Malls, Tutuban Center, Metropolis Star and Festival Mall in Alabang and Nepo Mall Pampanga. Visit www.rds.com.ph

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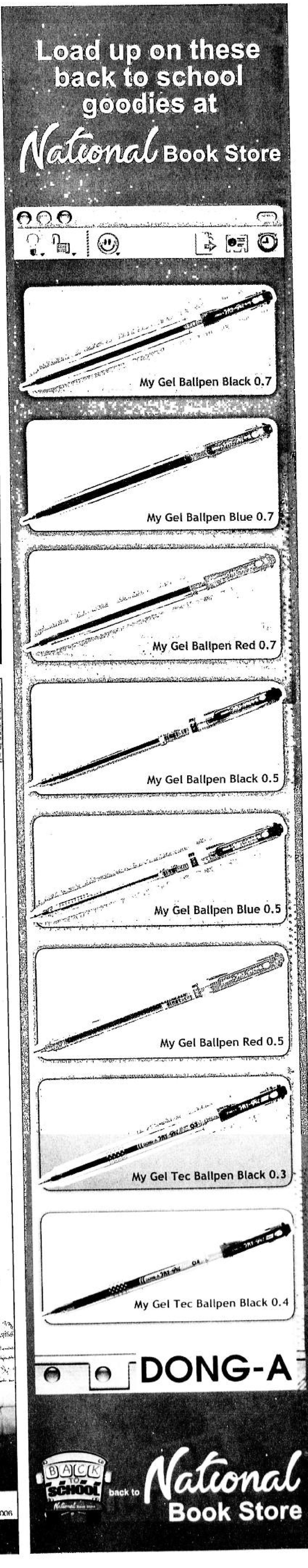

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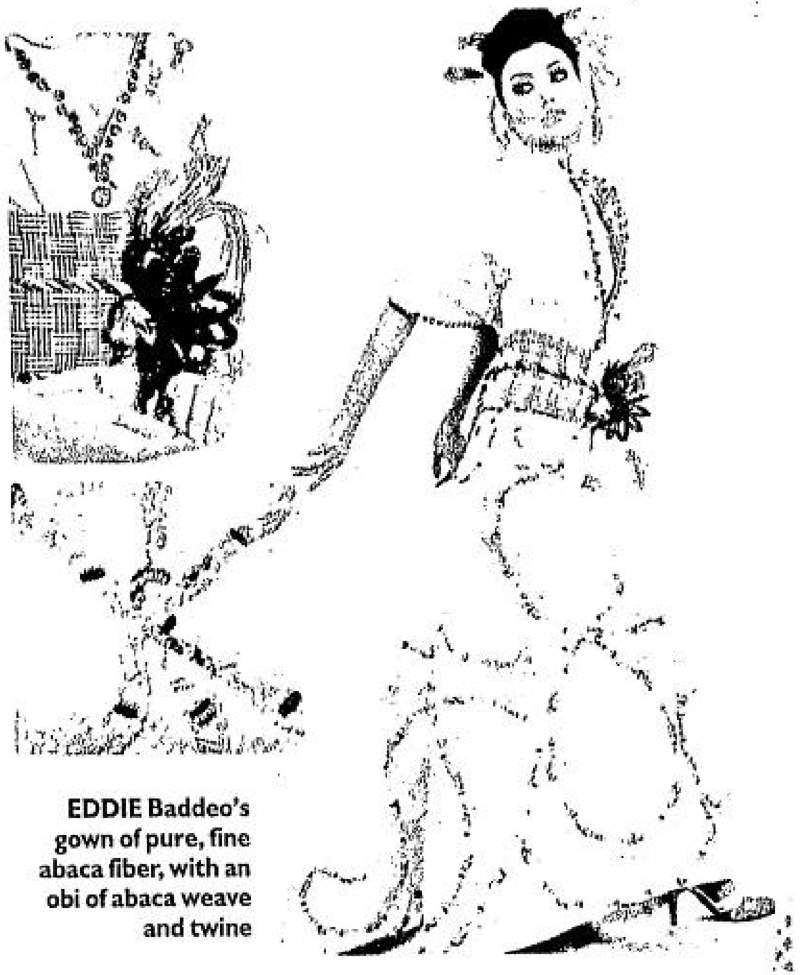
ABACA embellishments on hair

Abaca couture

ABACA, THE VERSATILE TWINE GROWN IN the Bicol region and which has a thousand and many uses in many industries from automotive to cosmetics, has found its way into fashion. A number of Filipino designers have come up with chic ways of using the versatile abaca in their haute couture creations.

In the recently launched "Abaca Philippines," a coffee-table book authored by Lalaine Villafuerte-Abonal and published by Rep. Luis Villafuerte which traces the origins of abaca growth and the many products into which it can be manufactured, fashion designer Eddie Baddeo made an original creation from abaca fiber: a gown of pure, fine abaca fiber edged with natural coconut buttons. The quilted shantung skirt is further embellished with abaca filaments and coco beads. An obi of abaca weave is stylized with abaca twine and hair and matching shoes are made wholly from abaca.

Photo shows Baddeo's couture gown at the Ayala Museum in Makati, modeled by JP Abinuman, and hair and makeup by Heidi Balicha of Bambi Fuentes salon and Eric Maningat of Studio 546.



EDDIE Baddeo's gown of pure, fine abaca fiber, with an obi of abaca weave and twine

Belts are the way to go

From page C1

or baby doll. Just make sure it's constructed well.

Keira for Chanel, Jane Fonda for L'Oreal

Today's "it" girl **Keira Knightley** is the new image model of the fragrance Chanel Mademoiselle for the young. She's taking over the place of **Kate Moss**, whose substance use apparently doesn't go well with fragrance.

Guess who L'Oreal's newest celebrity image model is? **Jane Fonda**—at 68 years old. According to WWD, Fonda is endorsing Age Re-Perfect Pro-Calcium Treatment Line. She joins L'Oreal's other image models who cut across ages—**Beyonce Knowles, Scarlett Johansson, Penelope Cruz, Eva Longoria**. As L'Oreal Paris' international general manager **Youcef Nabi** says, "Beauty doesn't stop at 30 or 40, and certainly not at 50."

Tina Jacinto is introducing a fashion line at Rustan's. That should see her and her husband **Rupert** coming here, from New York, more and more often.

Weekend warriors

The annual international triathlon was held in Subic over the weekend—not your run-of-the-mill sports event. It gathered men and women who are fully committed to an active lifestyle, while being the fiercest businessmen and corporate executives the rest of the week.

It must have been exhilarating for these corporate honchos who finished the event: HSBC's **Warner Manning**, ABS-CBN Publishing's **Ernie Lopez**, Van Melle Mentos' **Niels Hab**, PetPlans' **Larry Ocampo**, Fitness First's **Mark Ellis**, Nina Papagayo's **Frank Lacson**, Unilab's **Joey Torres** who did the sprint distance, and his sister, **Nona Torres**.

Meanwhile, tennis diehards at Palms Country Club in Alabang had a different idea for a *despedida* for fellow member **Noel Oribello** of Nokia, who's joining Nokia Indonesia. Members and friends had a "Noel Tennis Tournament"—led by tennis committee chair **PJ Enriquez**, Noel's wife **Thelma**, and **Anthony Villarosa**.

Divided into green and blue teams were Le Farge's **Lizza Vicaldo** and **Sheila Aguinaldo**, **Carms Tirado**, **Bing** and **Joyce Santos**, ABS-CBN's **Raffy Mangabat** and wife **Wilma**, **Arge Hubilla**, **Yoshikazu Uchida**, **Maricar Hofilena**, **Ariel Crisostomo**, **Malou Garbo**, **Rey Castro**, **Ricky Sy**, **Joey Verzo**, **Gretch Capinpin**, **Shelley Mojica** and **Jerry Chua**.

Whether it's triathlon or tennis or badminton, the city's legion of weekend warriors is surely growing. After all, you need to sweat off the stress. Work hard, and you want to play harder.

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Promo runs May 15 to June 15, 2006 only

Per DTI-NCR Permit no. 2423, Series of 2006

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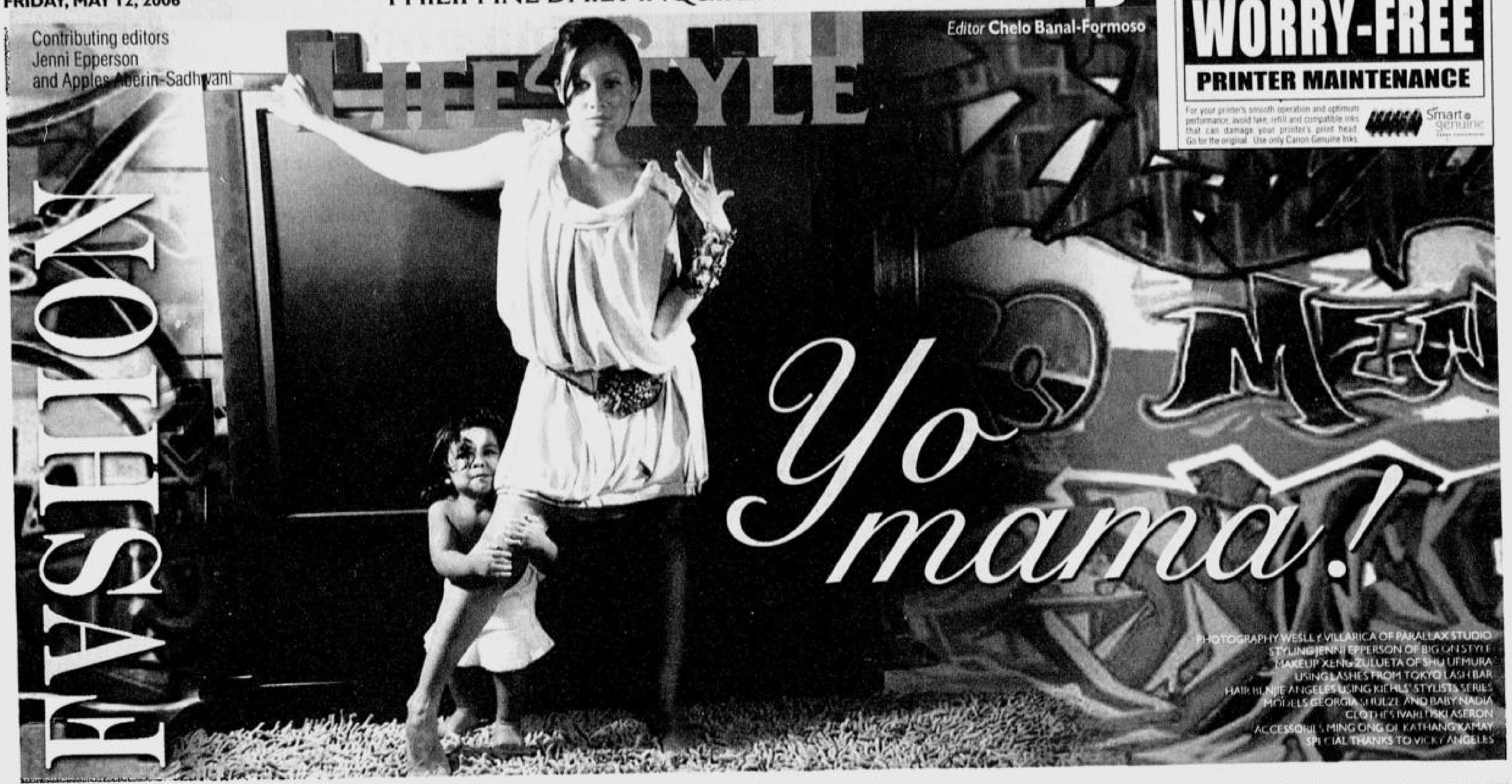

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CLOTHES IVARLUSKI ASERON
ACCESSORIES MING ONG OF KATHANG KAMAY
SPECIAL THANKS TO VICKY ANGELES

MILF!

(Mothers In Lovely Frocks)

From Red Box to red carpet, PTAs to parties, what must Demi-wannabe moms don? Two words: Look haute!

WITH A NINE-TO-FIVE job, bills to pay, a husband to attend to and kids to feed, the closest thing you'll ever get to looking like Demi is when your shirt is covered in mud—not from pottery foreplay, but from washing the dog.

Mabuhay!

Jenni Epperson

When you were single the only thing you've probably worried about was getting an appointment with the hottest hair colorist in town, squeezing a "maniped" during lunch break and scoring lacy underwear. That's hot.

Domestic bliss is more than just about preparing meals for the family, decorating the home, or doing the grocery: It's about doing all of those but wearing your sky-high stilettos and oversized shades and carrying your super-sized tote.

There is absolutely nothing wrong with sharing the love—but letting your *fashyon* self take a back seat from your Mama role—well, it's just plain rubbish.

Dreamy, perhaps? Not so practical, you may say. Well, you've dealt with domestic disasters in every practical way, so the last thing you want to look is domestic.

No time to go to your fave designer's lair? Well, make time! Squeeze in a fitting in your schedule and think of it as quality time for yourself. A little *chika-chika* with your designer can give you a slice of fashion heaven, keeping you sane and "balanced."

I often find myself seeking refuge in my designer friends' shops to take a breather. Over rows of fabrics, Diet Coke and fries, I giddily find out what dreamy designs they've whipped up for Tinsel Town's haute moms.

Recently, I swaggered in the studio of designer du jour, Ivarluski Aseron (0927-2736583), and found what moms would be buzzing about over the next potluck party: graphic shift dresses and divine dusters perfect for barbecue bonanzas and dish-washing debaucheries.

Ivar is fantastic when it comes to creating silhouettes that skim the body. What Axion is to grease, his designs are to your bulges—they just disappear! Modern trappings perfect for the modern mom!

Accessories

Accessories, too, are the salvation to tired old garb. Copper confections by Ming Ong of Kathang Kamay (0920-9521479) can turn any outfit from crappy to snappy.

Domestic bliss? Forget domestic! Let's focus on bliss. A dress molded to your silhouette... hair coiffed by a master stylist... skin

MILF!/D4

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THE STORE (GRAND BOULEVARD HOTEL) · GATEWAY MALL, ARANETA CENTER · SM MALL OF ASIA

SM City
CLARK

A city of shopping, dining and fun rises in Angeles, Pampanga

Set in a sprawling location at the gateway of the Clark Special Economic Zone (CSEZ), SM City Clark, the newest addition to the dynamic chain of SM Supermalls is the perfect introduction to a myriad of malling pleasures for shoppers in Central Luzon .

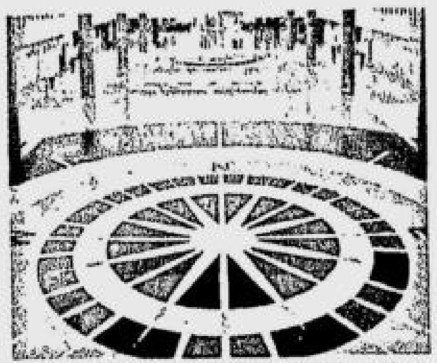
SM FOODCOURT

Located at the ground floor of the newly-opened SM City Clark, SM Foodcourt offers FREE Milo soft serve with a minimum P100 purchase with Nestea and Nestle Dalandan now thru June 12.

MILO Soft Serve

Fun City

The movies are alive and well - bursting with colors and excitement at **SM Cinema.** Housed in the 2nd floor of SM City Clark, SM Cinema has high-end facilities and well-appointed seating features. In its interiors, viewers can shed the cares of the day and vicariously live the stories unfolding on the big screen.



Located at the ground floor, the spacious ***Event Centre*** *is the venue for special events and live performances of guest celebrities.*

SM CINEMA

Lots of fun await Clark movie goers with SM Cinema's opening promos.

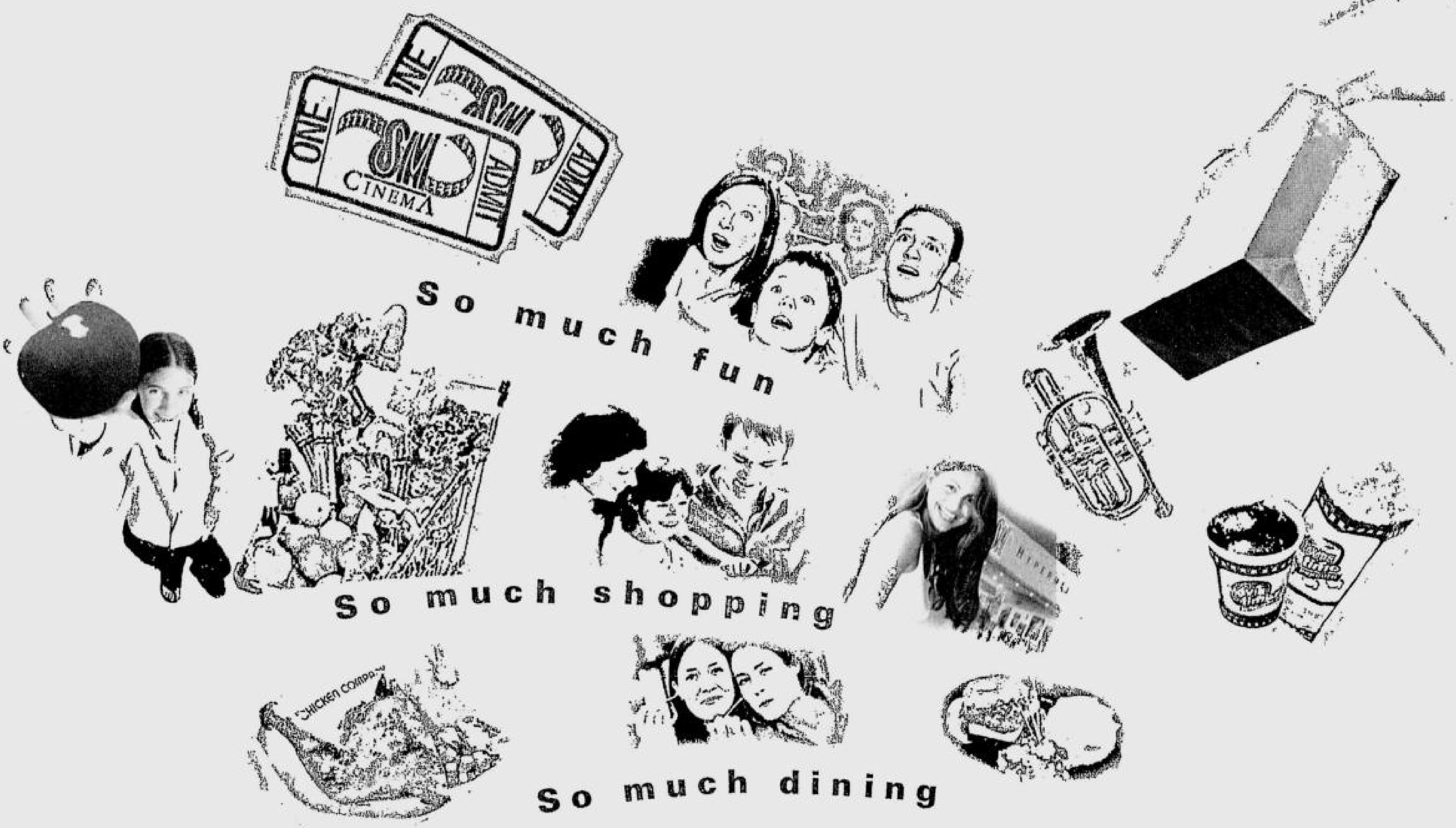
SM movie bundle
TICKET SAVERS
buy 2 tickets
get 1 FREE

SM movie raffle
SURPRIZES
Prizes at stake include:

- ① **Computer Showcase**
- ㊿ **Internet Cards worth P100 each (50 winners)**
- ⑩ **SM Gift Cards worth P1,000 each (10 winners)**

Dining City

Looking for the coolest treat to beat the summer heat? All you have to do is hie off to SM City Clark with the whole family and sample the delicious servings dished out by dozens of coffee shops, noodle houses, pizza parlors, snack bars and fastfood centers, particularly **SM Foodcourt** with its array of delectable offerings .



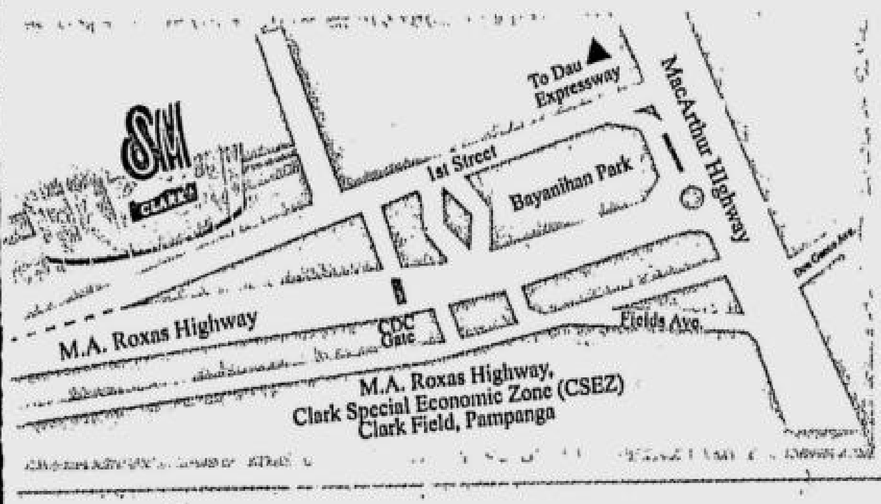
M A. Roxas Highway, Clark Special Economic Zone (CSEZ) C

Shopping City

Be among the first shoppers to take advantage of the irresistibly affordable summer buys. Over 250 establishments showcasing a wide selection of merchandise and services are found in the biggest mall this side of NLEX.

The mall's strategic location in CSEZ makes it accessible not only to residents of Angeles City but also to shoppers from neighboring towns including Mabalacat, Magalang and Porac in Pampanga; and Bamban, Capas and Concepcion in Tarlac.

In addition to scores of jeepneys, taxis and FX vehicles, 10 bus lines ply the route to the mall which has a parking terminal of 2,667 slots.



Discover the many things you can do at SM City Clark

Apparel / Shoes
- American Boulevard
- Arrow
- Artwork
- Bayo
- Bench
- Bobby Novenario
- Caterpillar
- Celine
- Cinderella
- Dickies
- Espada
- Esprit
- Freeway
- Folded & Hung
- Genevieve Gozum
- Gingersnaps
- Giordano
- Girbaud
- Guess
- Human
- Hush Puppies
- Itti Shoes
- Kamiseta
- Kashieca
- Manels
- Mendrez
- Mossimo
- Nafnaf
- Onesimus
- Osh Kosh B 'Gosh
- Oxygen
- Penshoppe
- Periwinkle
- Plains & Prints
- Quick Brown Fox
- Sabella
- Shapes
- Tribal
- Van Huesen
- Wade
- X-quisite
- Hangten

Jewelry / Watches
- Elynda's Jewelry
- Goldenhills Jewelry
- Hearts & Arrows
- Ibay's
- Jewelle
- Just Gift
- L Timo Studio
- Maneltes Jewelry
- Ocampo's Jewelry
- Orodiam
- Silverbest
- Silver Works
- Timex
- Unisilver
- Gold & Pearl Jewelry

Optical Shops
- Casaje Optical
- Ideal Vision
- Soliman Paroli Optical
- R. Canda Optical
- Executive Optical

Specialty / Novelty
- Travel Club
- GNC
- Best Friend Pet Shop
- Concordo
- Astroplus
- Odyssey
- Eliento
- The Health Shop
- Healthy Options
- The Body Shop
- Game Console
- Aksesoriz
- Bear Cuddler
- Blue Magic
- Hot Topic
- Marcella
- Papemelroti

Food
- Bealico Coffee
- Chowking
- C Italian Dining
- Coffee Experience
- Congo Grille
- Dae Jang Geum
- Dencio's Grille
- Dunkin Donuts
- Flavours of China
- French Baker
- Fortune Seafoods
- Gerry's Grill
- Goldilocks
- Go Nuts Donuts
- Greenwich
- Ikabud
- Jollibee
- Karate Kid
- Kenny Rogers
- KFC
- Kitaro
- Mamasuk
- Max's Restaurant
- McDonalds
- Michell's Cakes & Pastries
- Mister Donuts
- Mister Frosty
- Pancake House
- Pizza Hut
- Sbarro
- Seattle's Best
- Shakey's
- Shinbi
- Teriyaki Boy
- Tokyo Tokyo
- Red Ribbon

Foodcourt Stalls
- Aling Luding Sisig
- Aling Maring's Deli
- Chicken Company
- Inihaw Express
- Kusina ni Gracia
- Mister Toppings
- Sizzling Plates
- Tropical Hut

Computer / IT Gadgets
- Asianic
- Gold Sight Telecom
- Cellshoppe
- PC AXS
- DG Phones
- Electroworld
- Flightcom Plaza
- Gameline
- Gentext
- Gigahertz
- Globe Business Center
- Smart Wireless Center
- Inbox
- Nokia Hub
- Octagon Computer
- Hewlett Packard
- Silicon Valley
- The Sun Shop
- Wireless 'r Us
- Lie-Ric Cellular

Amusement
- Love Videoke
- Karaoke Hub
- Quantum
- Worlds of Fun
- Playmates
- Once Upon a Time...Joyland
- Li'l People

Services
- EMJ Watch Repair
- Com Clark Customer Service Center
- Copytrade
- Island Photo
- Great Image
- Holiday Inn Sales Office
- Jomarks Video
- Kameraworld
- LBC
- Mail and More
- Mr. Quickie
- Photoline
- Video City
- Picture City
- Freshaire
- David's for Rever
- Going Straight
- GQ Barbeshop
- RL Barbershop
- Let's Face It
- Ricky Reyes
- Skin Renew

Counters
- Brownies Unlimited
- Cafe Flor
- Coffee Overdose
- Divas Cafe
- El Kapetan
- Fiorgelato Ice Cream
- Ice Monster
- Lola Bebeng's Halo-halo

Books / Office Supplies
- Booksale
- National Bookstore
- Papyvore

Banks
- Banco de Oro
- China Bank

Lobby Carts
- Annie's Belgian Choco
- Betty's Native Kakanin
- Bulakbol
- Chicharon Espesyal
- Choo Choo's Waffle
- CSV Baliuag Pasalubong
- Digilites
- Fruitas
- Fruits 'n Waffles
- Ice Sarap
- Kettle Corn
- Key Cards
- Kingcom
- Milko
- Nacho King
- Ogie Dogie
- Pao Express
- Plato Wraps
- Popperoo
- Scoopery
- Snowpy
- Sondrik
- Tips 'n Tops
- Candy Zone
- Waffle Time
- Zen Zest
- Mr. Softy
- Pizza Pedricos
- R. Lapids
- Taste of Laoag
- Zagu

Major Anchors
- Ace Hardware
- Our Home
- SM Appliance Center
- SM Department Store
- SM Hypermarket
- Surplus Shop
- Watsons

Sporting Goods
- Chris T. Sports
- Sportshouse

Kiosks
- Amira Magic
- Aficionado
- Anime Cart
- Autofed
- Bags 'o Beads
- BBB Stickers
- Candy Corner
- Candy Station
- Cups and Cakes
- Daisies and Honeys
- Eu lala Perfume
- Flywear
- Graphic Works
- Juice Avenue
- Justine Cartel
- Kiddie Cart
- Mrs. Fields Cookies
- Nimtoo
- Pick & Mix
- Praise House of Music
- Prescripto
- Sasmuan Delicacies
- Skin Private Joyce
- Spoofs
- Sweet 'n Fancy Cake
- Triple V Balloon
- Twinkle

There's so much to do at

now open

SM City CLARK

k Field, Pampanga

mall hours: 10am-9pm

Kiss me, baby!

Freeze frame

MILF!

From page D1

prepped with diamonds. You hold the family together. Who's going to keep you together, if you don't pamper yourself?

Looking good means feeling good. Amid fixing diapers and lunch boxes and paying electricity bills, you should not forgot that.

Besides, your little ones look up to you for guidance and the next feeding bottle. They see how you deal with juggling both career and family, so you better look absolutely fabulous while you're at it.

In ways both big and small, it's possible to put the drama back in the home, Haute Mama-Style.

To borrow the words of mother Whitney (which, by the way, is what she needs right now): "Learning to love yourself, it is the greatest love of all."

E-mail author jfashion@inquirer.com.ph

PHOTOGRAPHY WESLEY VILLARICA
OF PARALLAX STUDIO
STYLING JENNI EPPERSON
OF BIG ON STYLE
MAKEUP XENG ZULUETA
OF SHU UEMURA USING LASHES
FROM TOKYO LASH BAR
HAIR BENJIE ANGELES
USING KIEHLS' STYLISTS SERIES
MODELS GEORGIA SHULZE
AND BABY NADIA
CLOTHES IVARLUSKI ASERON
ACCESSORIES MING ONG
OF KATHANG KAMAY
SPECIAL THANKS TO VICKY ANGELES

Lounge lizards

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Air Transport World Airline of the Year 2006

We didn't set out to win awards, but to provide our passengers with the best travel experience. As we celebrate our 60 years of service in the Philippines, we are gratified that our efforts were recognized last year with Skytrax's Airline of the Year 2005 award and most recently Air Transport World's Airline of the Year 2006 award. We would like to thank everyone – our staff, our partners and our passengers – who made it possible as we continue our commitment to safety, technical excellence and customer service.

Now you're really flying.

"Airline of the Year 2006" awarded by Air Transport World, the leading global aviation journal.
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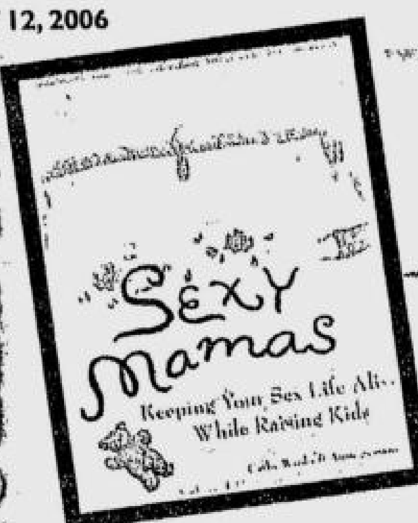
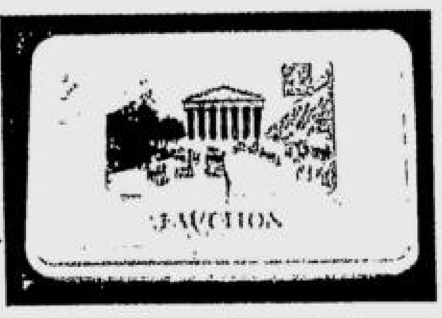
CATHAY PACIFIC
Airline of the Year 2006

LIFESTYLE

FASHION



MOTHER FAB HER. Sexy, passionate, fabulous before she was mom. Oh, still is! Get new titles to remind her of that. Book from Amazon.com



SUGAR MOMMY. It's just food, not love. But coming from you, it's all love, honey, sweet luscious love. Gourmet confection from Fauchon Paris, available at Rustan's grocery

MOTHER'S DAY GIFT GUIDE FOR HUSBANDS

Hot momma

There's a bombshell buried underneath that worn-out, overworked woman your kids call Mom

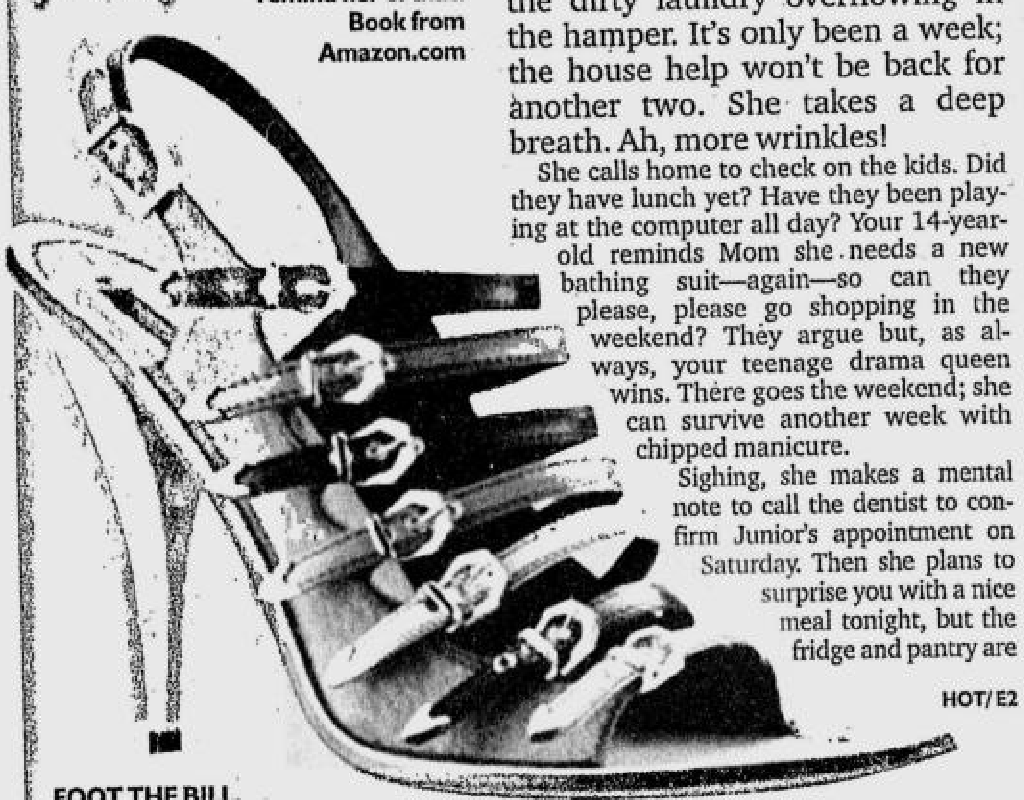
By Cheche V. Moral

NECK-DEEP IN PAPERWORK at her desk, she's distracted with nagging thoughts of the dirty laundry overflowing in the hamper. It's only been a week; the house help won't be back for another two. She takes a deep breath. Ah, more wrinkles!

She calls home to check on the kids. Did they have lunch yet? Have they been playing at the computer all day? Your 14-year-old reminds Mom she needs a new bathing suit—again—so can they please, please go shopping in the weekend? They argue but, as always, your teenage drama queen wins. There goes the weekend; she can survive another week with chipped manicure.

Sighing, she makes a mental note to call the dentist to confirm Junior's appointment on Saturday. Then she plans to surprise you with a nice meal tonight, but the fridge and pantry are

HOT/ E2



FOOT THE BILL.
Pay homage to the feet that bear your kids' weight. Get her foxy heels she won't splurge on herself. Strappy sandals from Louis Vuitton

HOT CROCS!

LACOSTE
FOOTWEAR

SUMMER SALE

10-50% OFF
on selected items

MAY 11 - 15, 2006

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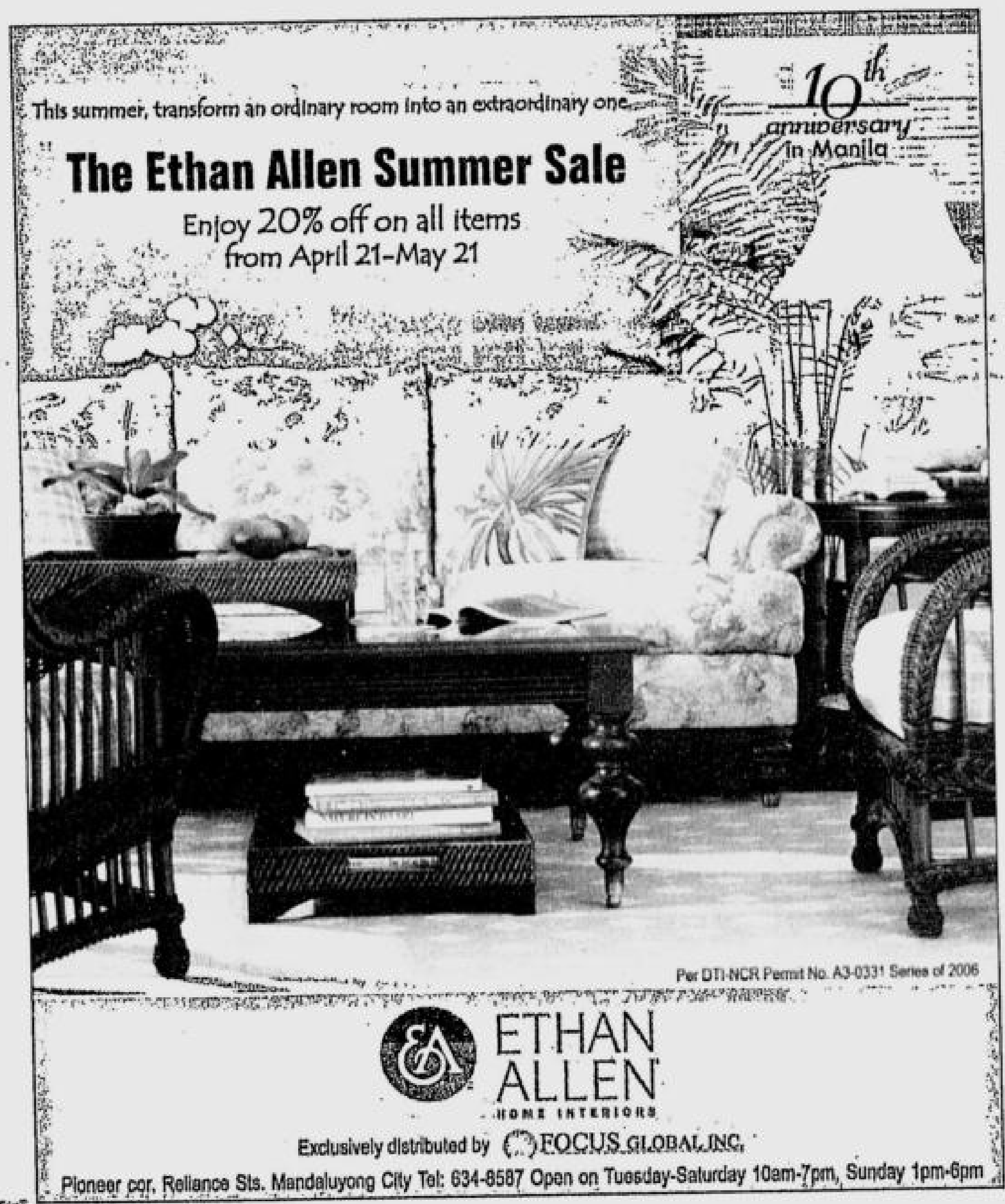
• The Power Plant Mall, Tel. No. 898-0933 • The Podium, Tel. No. 633-8226 • The Gateway Mall, Tel. No. 912-5726
• Robinsons Galleria, Tel. No. 638-8020 • SM City Davao, Tel. No. (082) 297-2510
• Ayala Center Cebu, Tel. (032) 232-5455 • SM Mall of Asia (Soon to Open)

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 2587, Series of 2006



This summer, transform an ordinary room into an extraordinary one.

10th anniversary in Manila

The Ethan Allen Summer Sale

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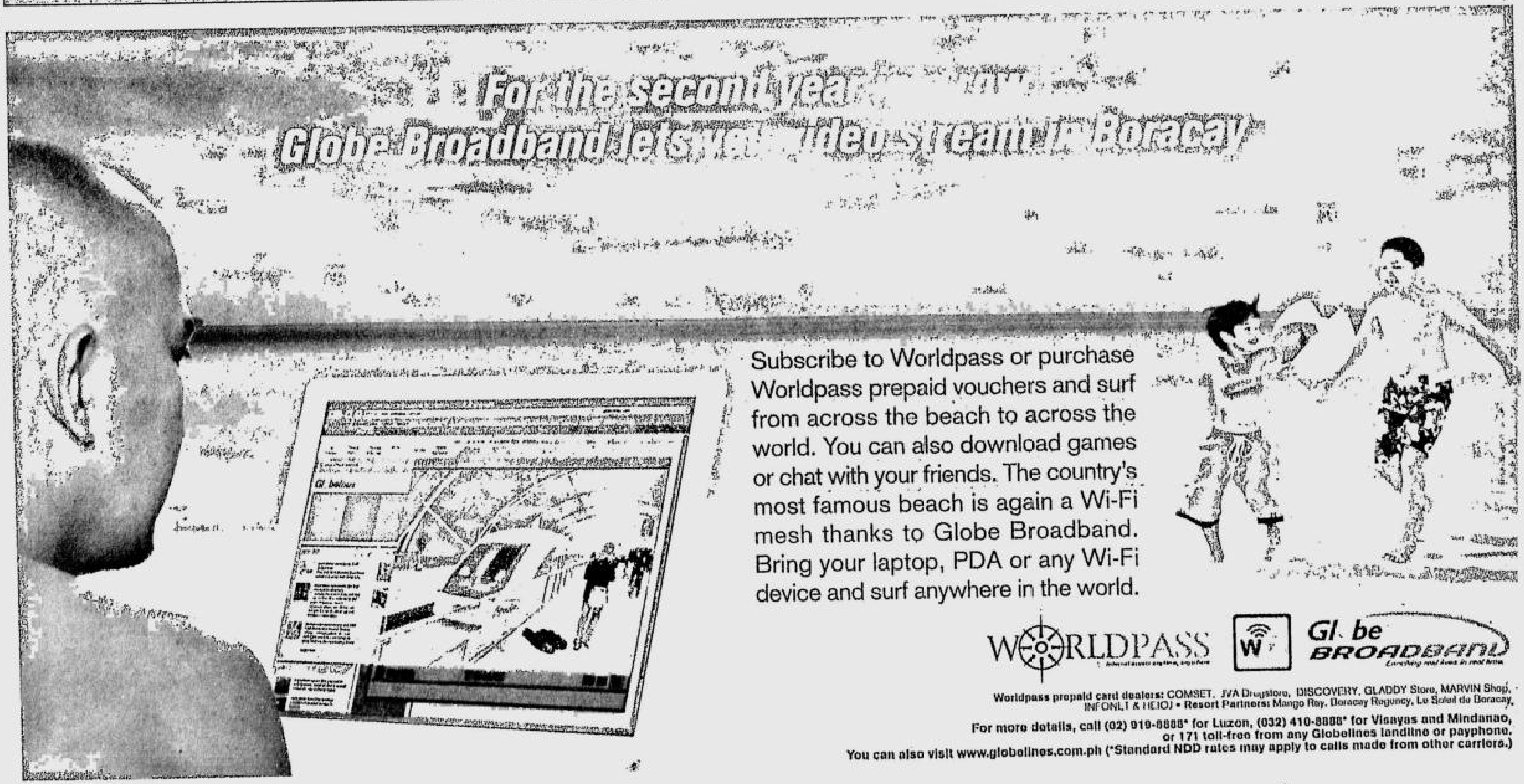

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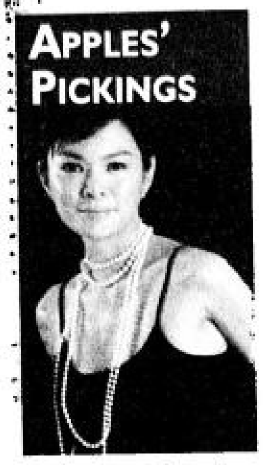
APPLES' PICKINGS



Apples Aberin-Sadhwani

Mommy's girl

Three of Manila's most fashionable women share stories on how their equally stylish moms have influenced their strong sense of style.

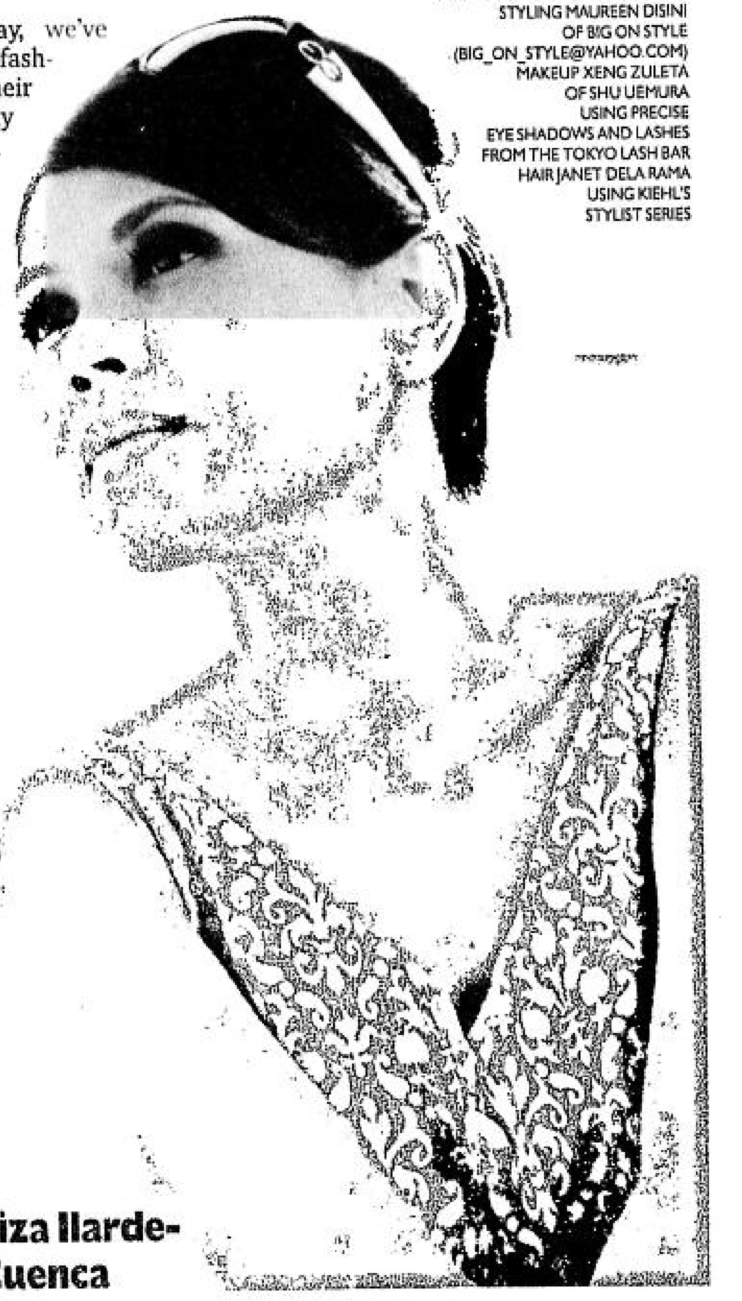
A MOTHER-DAUGHTER RELATIONSHIP is probably one of the most significant yet most complex bonds there is. A mother's influence on her daughter is strong and encompassing. A mom is a role model, emotional road map and arbiter of relationships.

I'm a bona fide mother's girl, so all of the above hold true for me. Somehow, I am an ally and extension of my mom. Although there were times during my teens and early 20s when I ventured away, so to speak, to establish my identity, I've found that I am becoming more and more like her in increasingly profound, and even mundane, ways.

On a lighter note, I'm proud to say that my mom's fashion sense has rubbed off on me as well. I used to borrow her clothes when I was in high school, and I continue to raid her closet for almost anything—be it jewelry or an evening gown. Her penchant for clean, classic lines has inspired me to always try to look neat and effortlessly chic. I'm obviously more into trends than she is but I'm undeniably cast from the same mold.

To celebrate Mother's Day, we've asked three of Manila's most fashionable women to share their thoughts on how their equally stylish moms have influenced their strong sense of style. Like mother, like daughter, indeed!

E-mail the author at afashion@inquirer.com.ph



PHOTOGRAPHY FRANK HOEFSMIT
STYLING MAUREEN DISINI
OF BIG ON STYLE
(BIG_ON_STYLE@YAHOO.COM)
MAKEUP XENG ZULETA
OF SHU UEMURA
USING PRECISE
EYE SHADOWS AND LASHES
FROM THE TOKYO LASH BAR
HAIR JANET DELA RAMA
USING KIEHL'S
STYLIST SERIES

Pauline Suaco-Juan

Editor in chief, Preview Magazine

How would you describe your mother's style? Your style?

When she was younger, she was very *pustura*—but then that was a sign of the times. She was the only girl, my mother, and every week she would get at least one new outfit courtesy of my *lola*, who was also a clotheshorse. She wore her clothes with matching shoes and bag and teased hair. These days, mom's still into matchy-matchy stuff, which is something I always chide her about. She feels strongly that a pair of earrings completes an outfit. I used to feel that way, too, but lately I've been seeing the merits of paring down as far as jewelry is concerned. I wouldn't call my style anti-*pustura*, though. I love getting all dressed up with hair, makeup and the works, but I can't do it all the time. It's simply too high-maintenance for me. I like looking somewhat undone. I don't really like looking so terribly styled. And I try to avoid that matchy-matchy look at all costs—unless I'm in one of those moods where I try to dress with irony.

Did you or do you raid her closet? What are your most precious finds?

All the time! One of the hardest things about marrying and living on our own was to have limited access to my mother's things. I'm there every Sunday rifling through her baubles to wear to work during the week. My mom and *lola* were pack rats so there's always a lot of undiscovered and rediscovered booty stored somewhere in the house. Some of the most precious to me are the vintage lace, locked away in a cedar Chinese chest. Some of them have their original price tags still attached to them. Imagine Chantilly lace for $30!

What are your mother's fashion staples? What are yours?

My mom loves her earrings—especially her South Sea and South Sea-esque pearls. I'm always at a loss when I'm asked this question. It used to be earrings, too, now I guess it's a perfect pedicure.

MOM Amelia "Mely" Abaya

MOM Peewee Banzon Adriano

Astrud Crisologo

Owner, Casa Amarilla

How would you describe your mother's style? Your style?

My mom's style was pretty eclectic! She had different looks. I guess I'm the same. My current look is Gidget meets Tiki *na* glam rock, kinda like Elvis' Blue Hawaii on steroids!

What do you admire most about your mother's style?

She was very brave and unwavering! She did it her own way despite my insistence of a makeover!

Did your mother's fashion preferences in any way influence yours?

Yes, most especially her earlier style during the '70s. I remembered being really proud of her when she'd visit me in grade school. She was a working mom so she looked very glamorous. She loved bright colors and prints—she hoarded a lot of *tela* for our custom-made matching outfits and I still have most of them today!

What are the similarities or differences between your style and hers?

We love color, prints, embroidery and crochet. We've kept certain pieces that we knew would come back some day! We're pack rats! The difference was she was more into corporate dressing. When she had a favorite piece of clothing she would wear it again and again. I would, but years apart.

What are your mother's fashion staples? What are yours?

My mom always wore big pearl earrings and big glasses. Mine are big sunglasses, bangles made out of endangered species (just kidding!), vintage bags and bakelite evening bags.

Liza Ilarde-Cuenca

Fashion journalist

How would you describe your mother's style? Your style?

My mother is into separates, which she can mix and match with other items in her closet, rather than complete head-to-toe ensembles. I also prefer separates, but my style is more about mixing and not matching—expensive with cheap, vintage with new, ladylike with something grungy.

Did your mother's fashion preferences in any way influence yours?

My mom is the complete opposite of a fashion victim. She's not interested in designer labels or acquiring the latest "it" bag. I, on the other hand, love designer wear (doesn't mean I can afford them, though!), but she has influenced me to look beyond the label, and to choose things I can wear beyond a season.

What are the similarities or differences between your style and hers?

As I went through her photo albums one time, I noticed that my mother wore a lot of prints. She still does. I love prints, too, but the difference is, while she wears her prints with solids, I kick it up a notch by wearing different prints together.

Did you or do you raid her closet? What are your most precious finds?

I have claimed her sweaters and knit tops from the '60s, which are still in pretty good condition! These days I raid her closet when I need to borrow jewelry, which I end up not returning (laughs).

MOM Sylvia Arrastia Ilarde

MOM Mimi

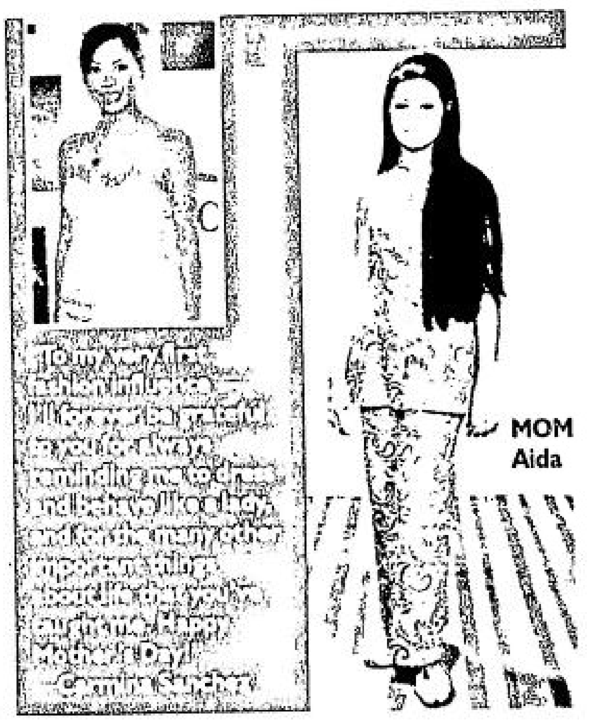
"My mother, Mimi, has greatly influenced how I came to develop my own sense of style, especially when it comes to accessorizing. She has the most extensive collection of jewelry, accessories and bags from all over the world, which my [illegible] and I love to borrow."
—Bianca Valerio

"Dear Mi, everything I am today, I owe to you. To the beautiful, incredible woman who gave me life and did everything she could to make sure it would be a great one. I love you, and I thank you!
—Myrza Sison

MOM Lilia

MOM Becky

"From childhood, my mom was my [illegible] stylist. She taught me to explore my creativity, dare and not care, and be fearless with fashion. Happy Mother's Day! I love you!
—Amina Aranaz-Alunan

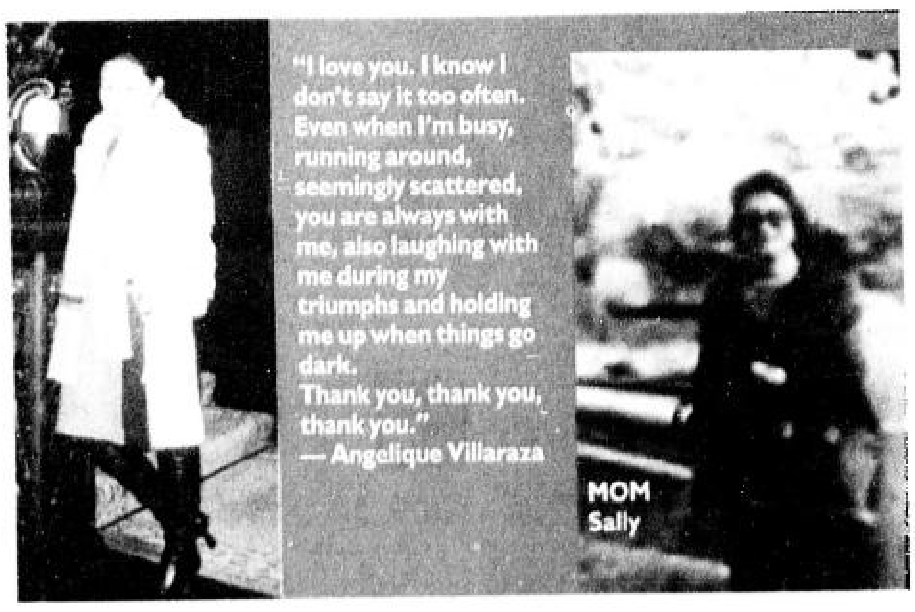


"To my very first fashion influence—[illegible] for always reminding me to dress and behave like a lady, and for the many other important things about life that you've taught me. Happy Mother's Day!
—Carmina Sanchez

MOM Aida

Mother board

We pay tribute to the mothers of Manila's style luminaries. As the saying goes, 'The apple doesn't fall far from the tree.' In this case, style truly is in the genes.



"I love you. I know I don't say it too often. Even when I'm busy, running around, seemingly scattered, you are always with me, also laughing with me during my triumphs and holding me up when things go dark.
Thank you, thank you, thank you."
— Angelique Villaraza

MOM Sally

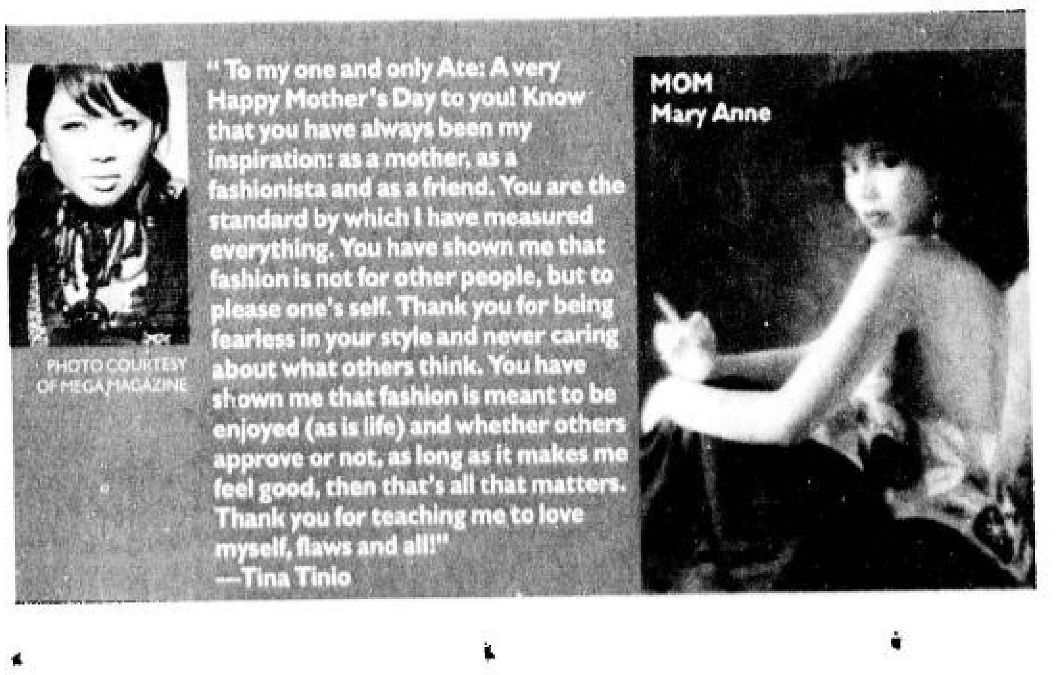


PHOTO COURTESY OF MEGA MAGAZINE

"To my one and only Ate: A very Happy Mother's Day to you! Know that you have always been my inspiration: as a mother, as a fashionista and as a friend. You are the standard by which I have measured everything. You have shown me that fashion is not for other people, but to please one's self. Thank you for being fearless in your style and never caring about what others think. You have shown me that fashion is meant to be enjoyed (as is life) and whether others approve or not, as long as it makes me feel good, then that's all that matters. Thank you for teaching me to love myself, flaws and all!"
—Tina Tinio

MOM Mary Anne

CONFETTI
View TRICK

Hot momma

MAMMA MIA! Nothing stokes the fire, even in the earthiest of Mamas, than wispy laces and sumptuous silks for her boudoir. Lingerie by Agent Provocateur

QUEEN MUM. Take her on a holiday fit for a royal. You are her world, give her the world. Sunrise at Amanpulo

From page F1

nearly empty. A trip to the supermarket after work…

If, dear husband, you've ever wondered where that vivacious, perpetually perfumed woman you married has gone, that's her at the sink, wrangling with dirty dishes as you kick back, sated, with a sweating amber bottle in one hand, the TV clicker on the other.

How do you show your appreciation? Not by counting the wrinkles on her face, no, no, or by poking at her flabs. And certainly not, we hope, by comparing her to the twinks half her age in your office.

Maybe you can start by putting away that beer bottle and taking over at the sink (or nag the kids to). Tell her to get a long, relaxing shower, maybe massage her feet afterward, ask about her day, complement her… She'll know you're lying, but that little effort on your part will go a long way.

Didn't you think she'd probably want to spend her days in the spa, getting primped at the salon or burning calories at the gym to regain her 24-inch waistline if she didn't put all your family's needs first? She'd probably be living in skin-tight minis and three-inch stilettos if they were practical enough to run after a toddler with. And she certainly can't spend hours preening in front of the mirror with so many chores at hand.

Think again: Each new crease on her face, each single added pound on her hip, each frumpy clothing on her body, each heartache is directly proportional to her love for you and the kids. The kids may be too young to realize this, or too caught up in their own little selfish kids' worlds, but it shouldn't be lost on you. So think before your eyes stray again on those office twinkies.

For once at least every single year, reciprocate that love with the same kind of care she gives 365 days of the year. Make her feel like that bombshell you married before the kids came one after the other. This Mother's Day, make it all about her.

Take over the kid duties this weekend and send her for some pampering at the spa and salon, or maybe get a pedicure to go with those coquettish heels you'll surprise her with. Make a side trip to the bookstore, get her those new, popular self-help tomes to remind her of that hot mama buried underneath all her mommy duties. And, for chrissakes, free up some of her time so she can find a window to read!

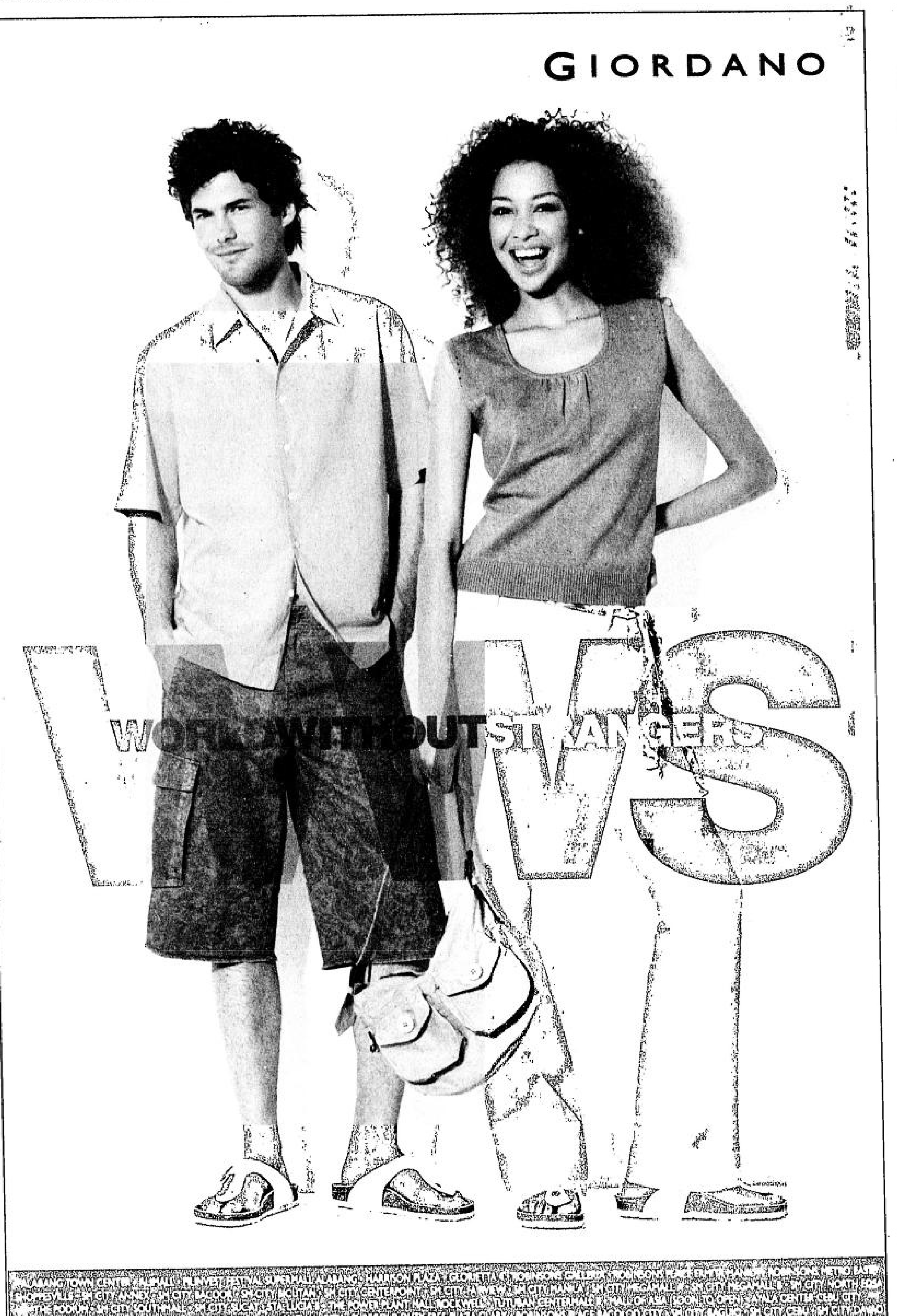
She'll say you're nuts for getting her sexy lingerie, but she'll be tickled scarlet no less. (Tip: If you're not sure of her size, it's always more flattering to get the smaller one. Get a size too big and you defeat the purpose. This you'll learn the hard way.)

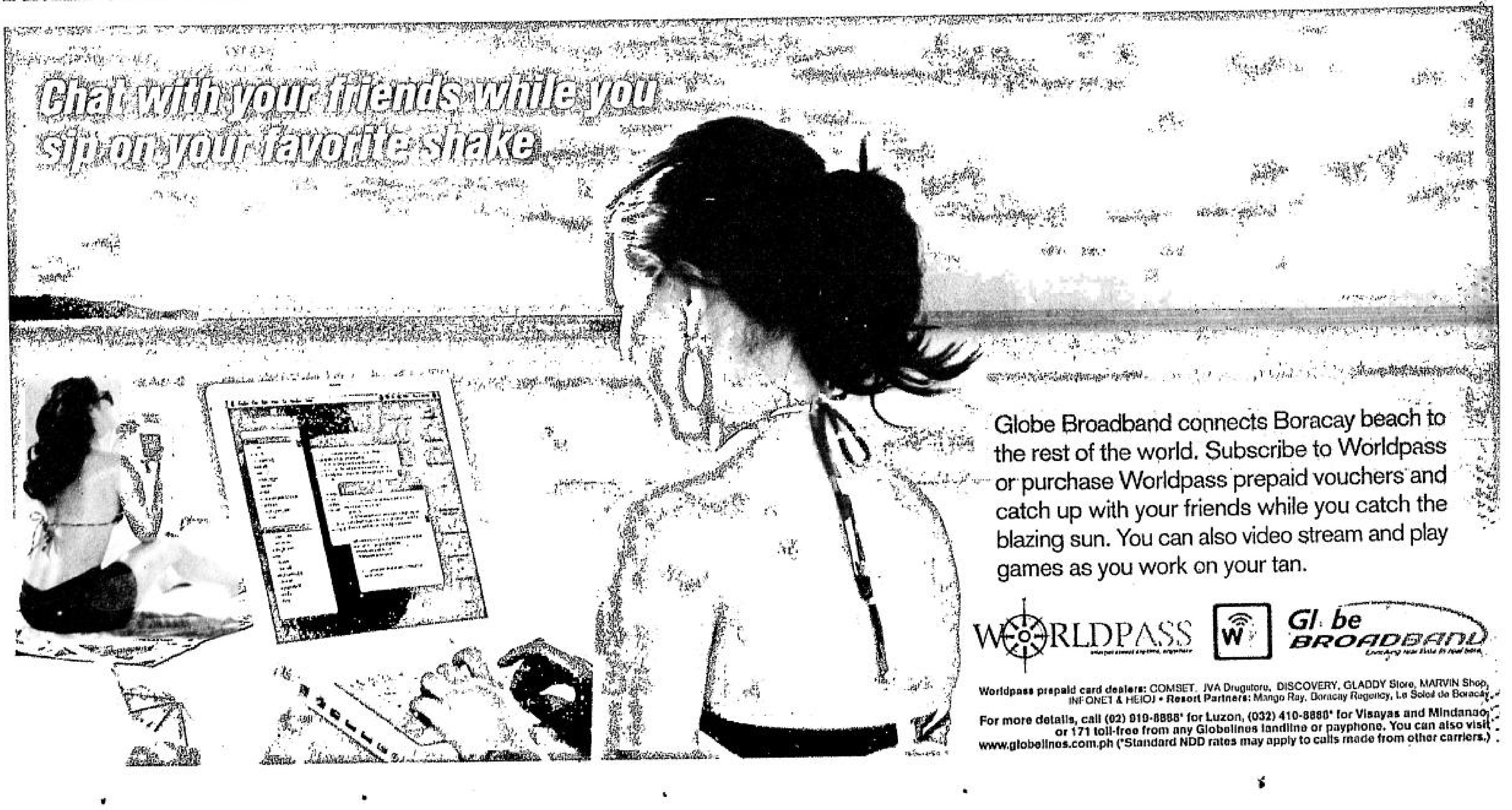
A bunch of red roses to go with the lingerie may be cliché, but it never hurts, honey, never. Neither does a basket of some spicy goodies and dark, luscious confections you two can share in bed; or some sensual bath scents, for both your pleasure.

Lastly, there's nothing like saying, showing—and meaning—it. The love of your kids' mama is cheap, as you must know by now (no diamond purchase necessary, but why not if you can afford it?).

If it's too much to ask of you to do it all year, what's a day to pay it all back?

MOTHER NOSE BEST. Stir up her senses with intoxicating scents. French perfume from Lanvin





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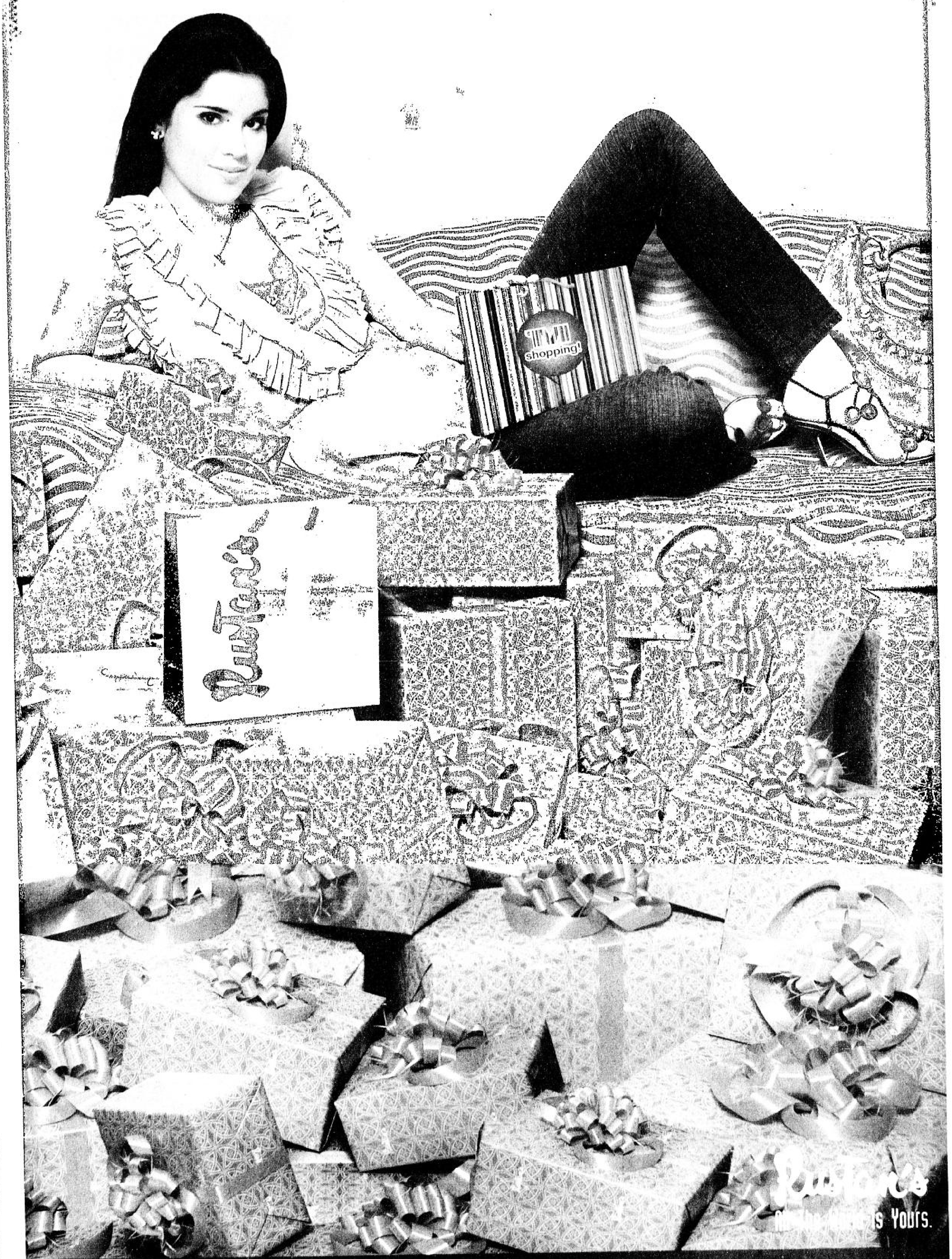
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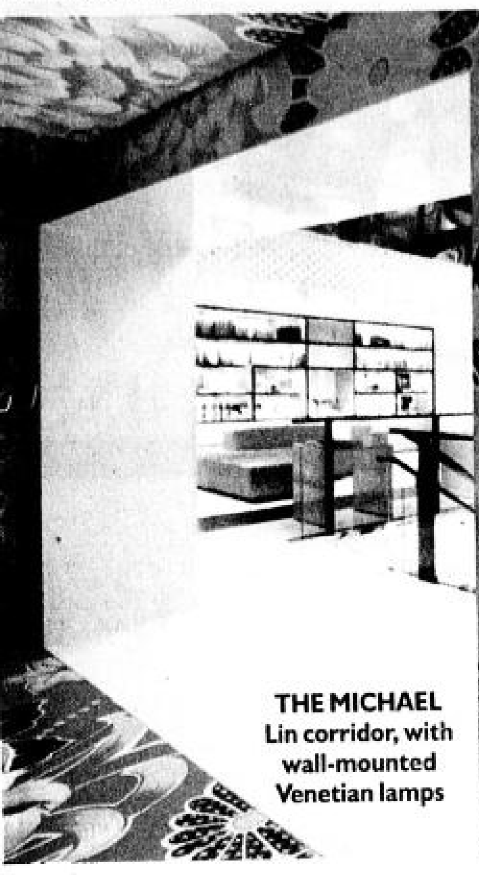
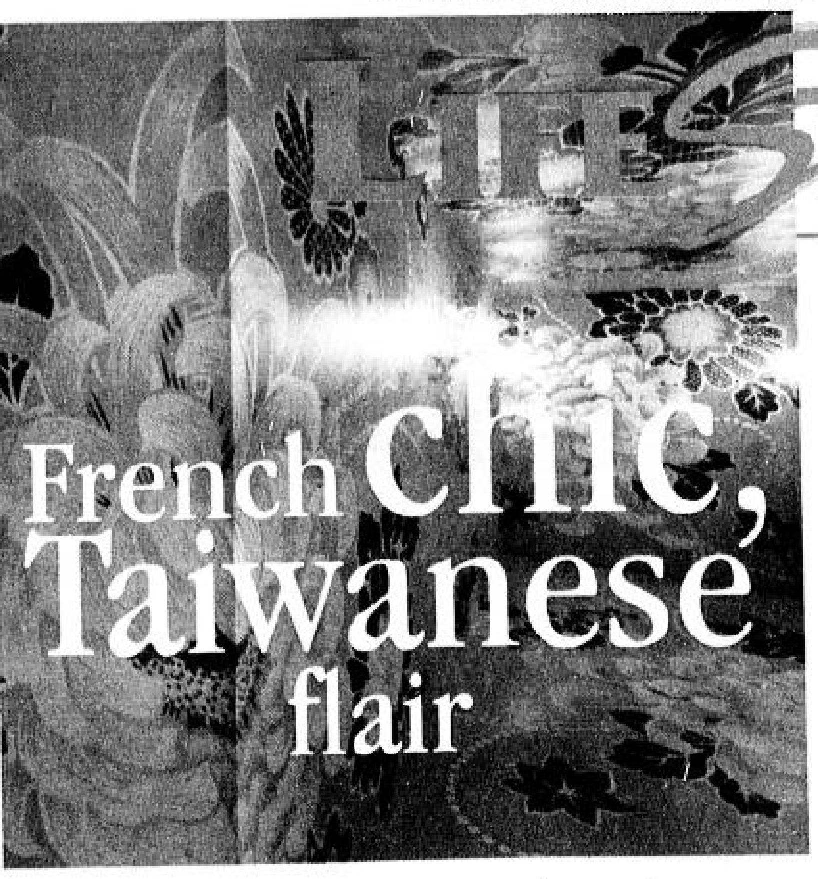


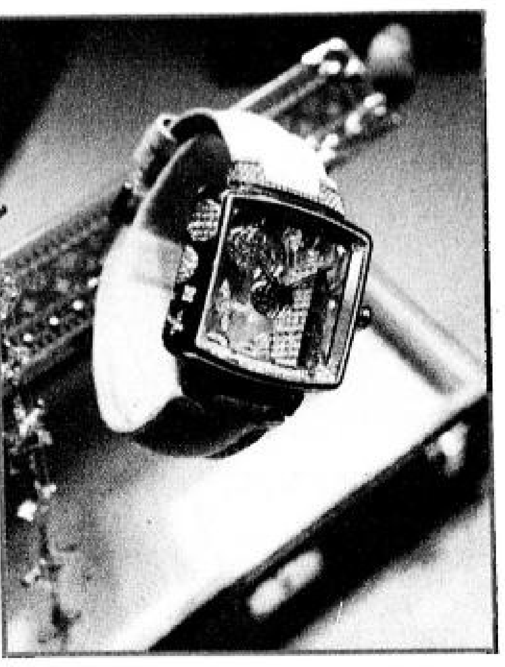
THE MICHAEL Lin corridor, with wall-mounted Venetian lamps



French chic, Taiwanese flair

Taipei is only the fifth city in the world to host a Maison, the premier level of concept stores by Louis Vuitton

LOUIS VUITTON



THE LIMITED-EDITION Speedy Twilight Taipei, with a diamond-encrusted likeness of Taipei 101 on the dial. At right, the gold-and-diamonds Pineapple Charm, available worldwide next month

By Cheche V. Moral

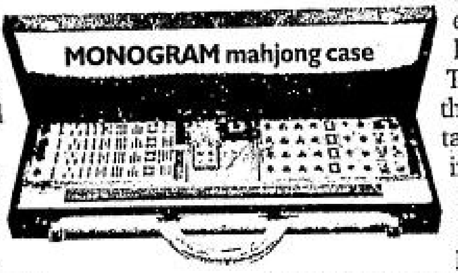
EVEN AS THE INcessant downpour threatened to literally rain on its parade, not even the 5.6-magnitude earthquake that jolted the city could've stopped the opening of Louis Vuitton Maison in Taipei on April 28.

Taipei is only the fifth city—and the third in Asia—to host a Maison, the premier level of concept stores by the French luxury malletier, following Paris, New York, Tokyo and Hong Kong. It's a testament to the significance of the Taiwan market to the brand. The company opened its first store in Taiwan 23 years ago and, with the Maison's opening, now has nine stores across the island.

MINI LV purses, er, bag charms

Cultural imprint

An LV Maison is home not just to the entire LV collection, but also bears the cultural imprint of the city through collaborations with a local artist for the store's look and design.



MONOGRAM mahjong case

Located on Chung Shan North Road in the Taiwan capital, the LV Maison Taipei was designed by the Japanese architect Kumiko Inui, who is also responsible for the company's store in Kochi, Japan. Before she set up her own firm, the diminutive woman had previously worked for Jun Aoki, the prominent architect who had designed the exteriors of many an LV store—in New York, Hong Kong Landmark, and Ginza, Omotesando, Osaka, Nagoya and Roppongi Hills in Japan.

The entire facade of the four-story Taipei Maison features LV's signature Damier checkerboard pattern. The opaque stones glow at night owing to LED backlighting. The Damier theme is carried throughout the interiors, with a skylight atop the staircase connecting the four levels.

The ground floor houses LV's most popular items, such as women's handbags, eyewear, small leathergoods and select jewelry, including the limited-edition Speedy Twilight Taipei watch that bears a diamond-encrusted likeness of Taipei 101, the world's tallest building. Taiwan's iconic fruit, the pineapple, is also immortalized for the occasion with the Pineapple Charm, which comes in yellow gold with 28 diamonds or yellow sapphires.

Men's ready-to-wear, luggage, footwear (including shoes for little boys!) and accessories are on the second level. Right above it is devoted to women's RTW, footwear, eyewear, accessories, and handbags, naturally.

The Taipei Maison houses a bookstore with a collection of tomes on art, design, fashion, lifestyle and travel, all subjects that are congruent to the heritage of

FRENCH/ F2

THE TAIPEI Maison is the first to carry an LV bookstore outside of Paris, this one adjoining the men's leathergoods section.

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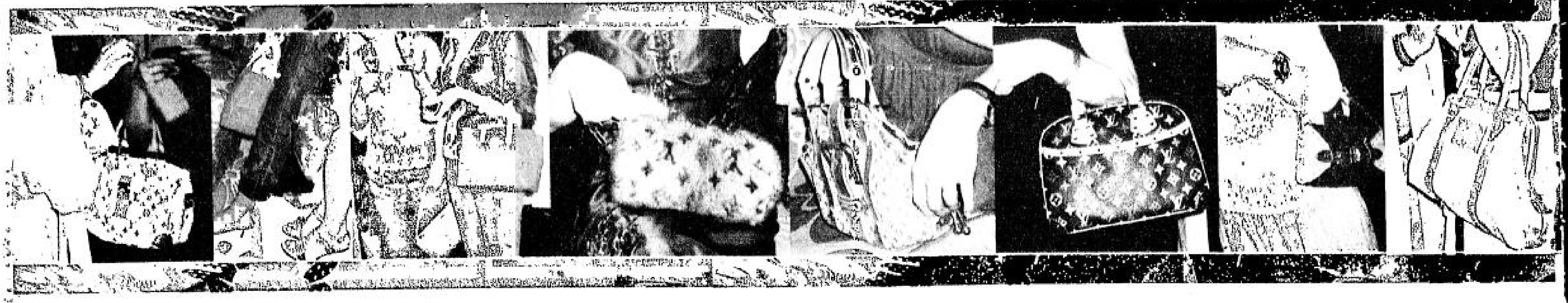
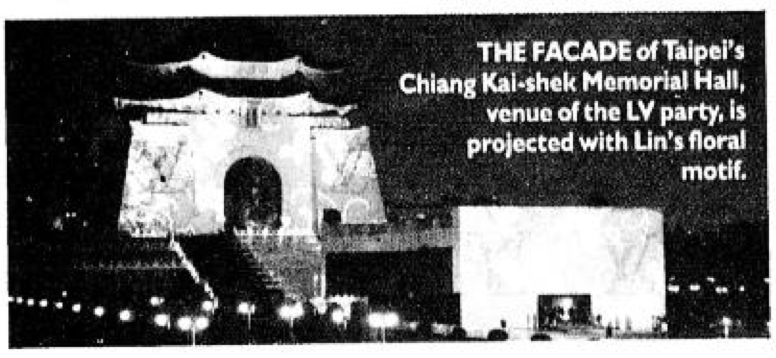


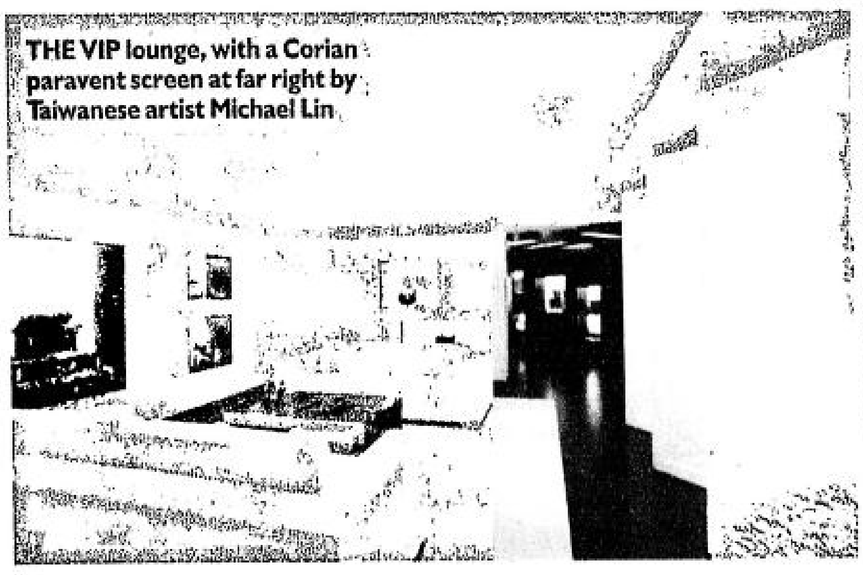
LV CHAIR and CEO Yves Carcelle (third from left) is flanked by Guillaume Thierry, LV Taiwan CEO; Korean pop star Rain; Francois Delage, LV Asia-Pacific president; and female models



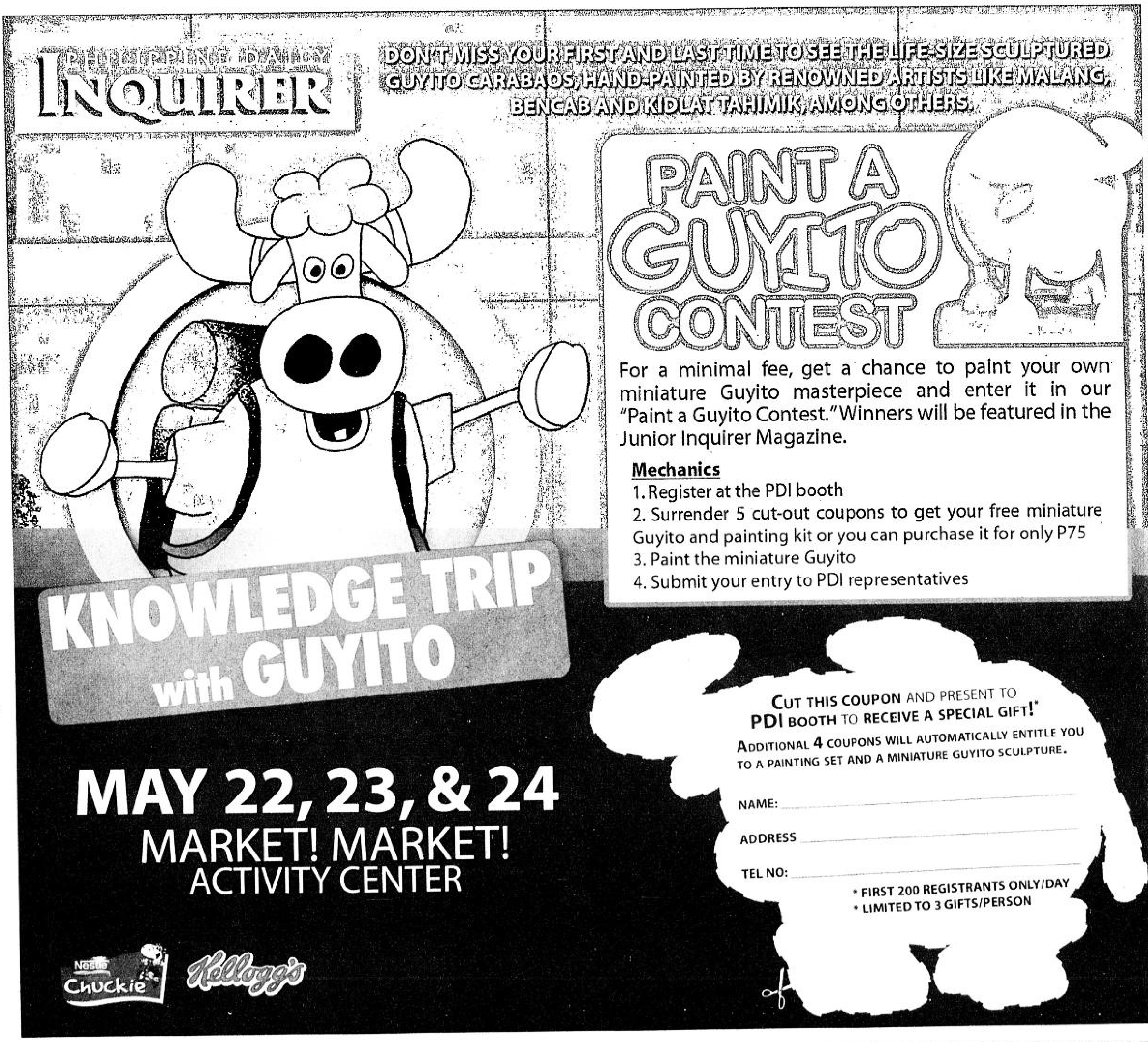
THE FACADE of Taipei's Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall, venue of the LV party, is projected with Lin's floral motif.

French chic, Taiwanese fl

THE ARCHITECT AND THE ARTIST. Kumiko Inui (left) and Michael Lin



THE VIP lounge, with a Corian paravent screen at far right by Taiwanese artist Michael Lin



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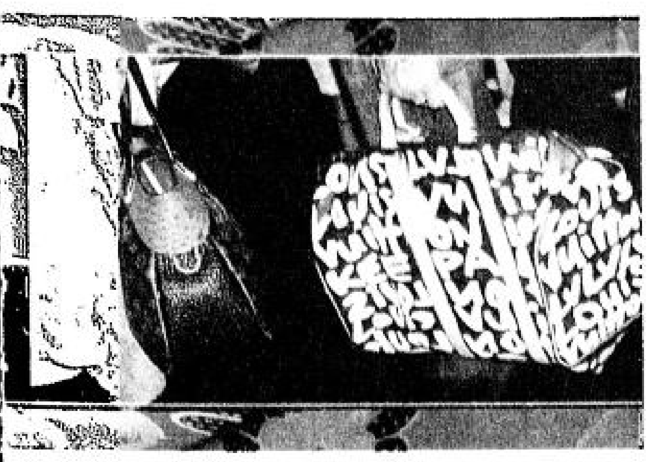

THE TAIWANESE sooo love their LV purses, and proof are these sightings at the Taipei Maison party. But the Muscovites love their Marc Jacobs-designed ready-to-wear even more, LV chief Yves Carcelle told the INQUIRER. With only two stores in Moscow, new-rich Russians top the French fashion house's pret-a-porter sales, beating even the Japanese. LV has over 40 stores in Japan. CHECHE V. MORAL

air

From page F1

Louis Vuitton and which, according to CEO and chair Yves Carcelle, "complement the luxury products and atmosphere." Taipei is the first LV store to carry this concept outside of Paris.

Part of the 600-title collection is on the men's level. Here, clients can browse through the Magic Book, an implement that flips its pages with an electronic sensor. No danger of dog-earing precious pages, thank you very much.

The fourth level takes the greater part of the book collection. Adjacent to it is the stark-red Michael Lin corridor, a striking contrast to the elegantly muted look of the entire store.

Local flair

Lin is a Taiwanese artist based in Paris and Taipei who was commissioned to provide the local flair to the Maison. Known for his immense floral patterns affixed on vast spaces, the 42-year-old artist reproduced a bright red floral pattern culled from a tattered Taiwanese rug on an L-shaped section of the Maison's VIP section. The pattern is painted floor-to-ceiling, seamlessly blending into the crimson interiors of the elevator. The elevator's leather interiors are embossed and embroidered with the same floral pattern, and is said to mimic the inner lining of a trunk.

Lin's patterns are, in fact, large-scale reproductions of textile patterns found in Taiwanese homes, designs of which are already fast vanishing.

"You will probably be disappointed in this," Lin said. "I don't design the patterns. I copy them from the original and manipulate them. In that way I'm placing tradition into a new context, and renew it in that way."

GOLD necklace à la Carrie Bradshaw

For the first time, Lin also worked with the material Corian, which is part plastic and part stone, carving the same floral patterns in a white paravent screen located at the VIP lounge area.

The artist's works would be the enduring theme of the LV affair, with the patterns adorning the indoor gazebos and upholstered seats at the majestic Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall, the venue of the Maison's opening party. The flower prints were also projected on the exterior walls of the hall. The metal plates of the dance floor were similarly stenciled with floral patterns.

And no, he didn't mind that people literally walked all over his work, Lin said. "You are enveloped by the work. You use it. You make it a part of you. I guess that's the most important thing with ornaments; it should be pleasurable."

Carcelle said he was quite pleased with Lin's work that he's not writing off the idea of signing him up for another project.

"We like to work with people we've worked before," he said. "Yes, Michael was chosen because he's Taiwanese. But when we like your work, just as we like Kumiko's, nationality later becomes immaterial... And we like to work with artists."

A Michael Lin handbag, possibly? Hmmm, not too shabby next to a Murakami.

FROM THE INDOOR gazebos to the dance floor, the LV party is awash in Michael Lin prints.

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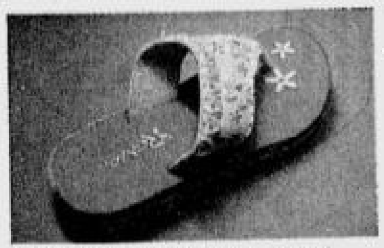
No business like shoe business

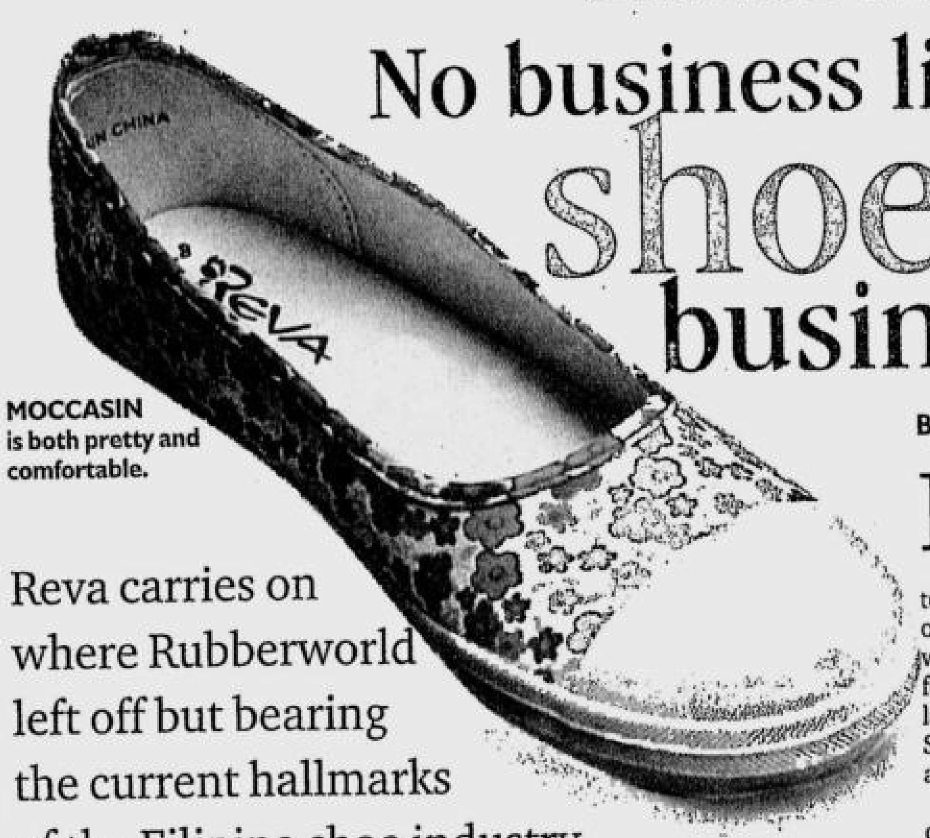
Reva carries on where Rubberworld left off but bearing the current hallmarks of the Filipino shoe industry

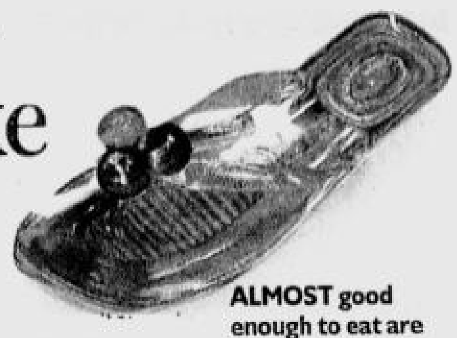
By Linda B. Bolido

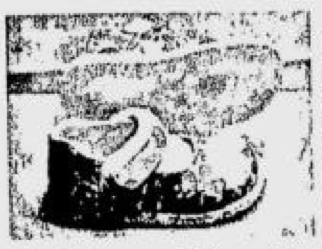
ORANGE flip-flops will take you anywhere.

ACID green flip-flops will complement any feet.


DAINTY slipper with beaded strap


MOCCASIN is both pretty and comfortable.


ALMOST good enough to eat are the "berries" on this jelly slipper.


CHILDREN'S shoes come in rainbow hues and modern designs.

PEOPLE WHO GREW UP WITH Rubberworld may now be raising a generation in Reva world.

Set up by José Yu, probably the first Filipino to train in shoemaking in Germany, home base of some prestigious sports brands, Rubberworld was among the top labels in the country for decades, manufacturing footwear, particularly local athletic shoes and the then popular Spartan rubber slippers, for Filipinos of all ages.

But as the local shoe industry increasingly became untenable, what with the entry of cheap imports, restive workers, rising costs of raw materials, Rubberworld found distribution more practical than manufacturing.

And so, for years, the company, renamed Unisport Italia Mfg. Corp., became a distributor of some foreign labels, with the primary responsibility of bringing them to provincial retailers.

The "shoe" of a distributor might have been comfortable enough for a while but the call of leather (and all the other materials they now turn into footwear) proved too irresistible for Yu. The Filipino shoemaker never really lost his feel for the product. Those who know him marvel at his mastery of the craft which enables him to tell if a shoe is unevenly made by just looking at it and turning it this way and that a few times.

The Reva brand was born in 1997, bearing the hallmarks of the evolution of the Philippine shoe industry. Reva is a production that gets its direction and ideas from the Philippines. Yu's daughter, Eleanor Ocampo, has eagerly jumped into the old family business assuming the position of vice president and providing most of the design ideas. She basically runs the company here while her father oversees work by production units in China.

Design 'improv'

Ocampo says she does not do any actual illustrations. What she does is draw inspirations and generate design ideas from her travels and from various publications.

Tweaking the designs here and there so they will be different from the original and will be more suitable to the actual needs of the Filipino foot, the ideas are sent to production units in China for manufacture.

The Chinese end also suggests designs occasionally, drawing from trends gleaned from what importers buy. China, of course, has become a major shoe exporter. Just look at what most local retailers are selling these days.

Ocampo says Reva products are now geared primarily towards the "after-sport" lifestyle—what people wear to go malling, on a leisurely stroll, casual gettogethers or just about any occasion that does not call for formal leather or tough sports shoes.

Pretty slip-ons dominate the Reva line for women and sturdy open-toed sandals for men (what are occasionally referred to locally as "sandalyas ni Hudas"). Ocampo says espadrilles may be expected during the hot, dry season.

A few athletic shoes are thrown in occasionally and an apparel line is being considered in the future.

Children get rubber shoes in candy colors and smaller versions of the sandals and slip-ons.

Prices range from a low of P59 to no more than P1,200.

The label is available in major shopping malls or the company showroom at 497 President Quirino Ave. cor. Zulueta St., Paco, Manila (tel. 5617137).

FLORAL bubble skirts for young girls are fashion staples at Space Boutique.

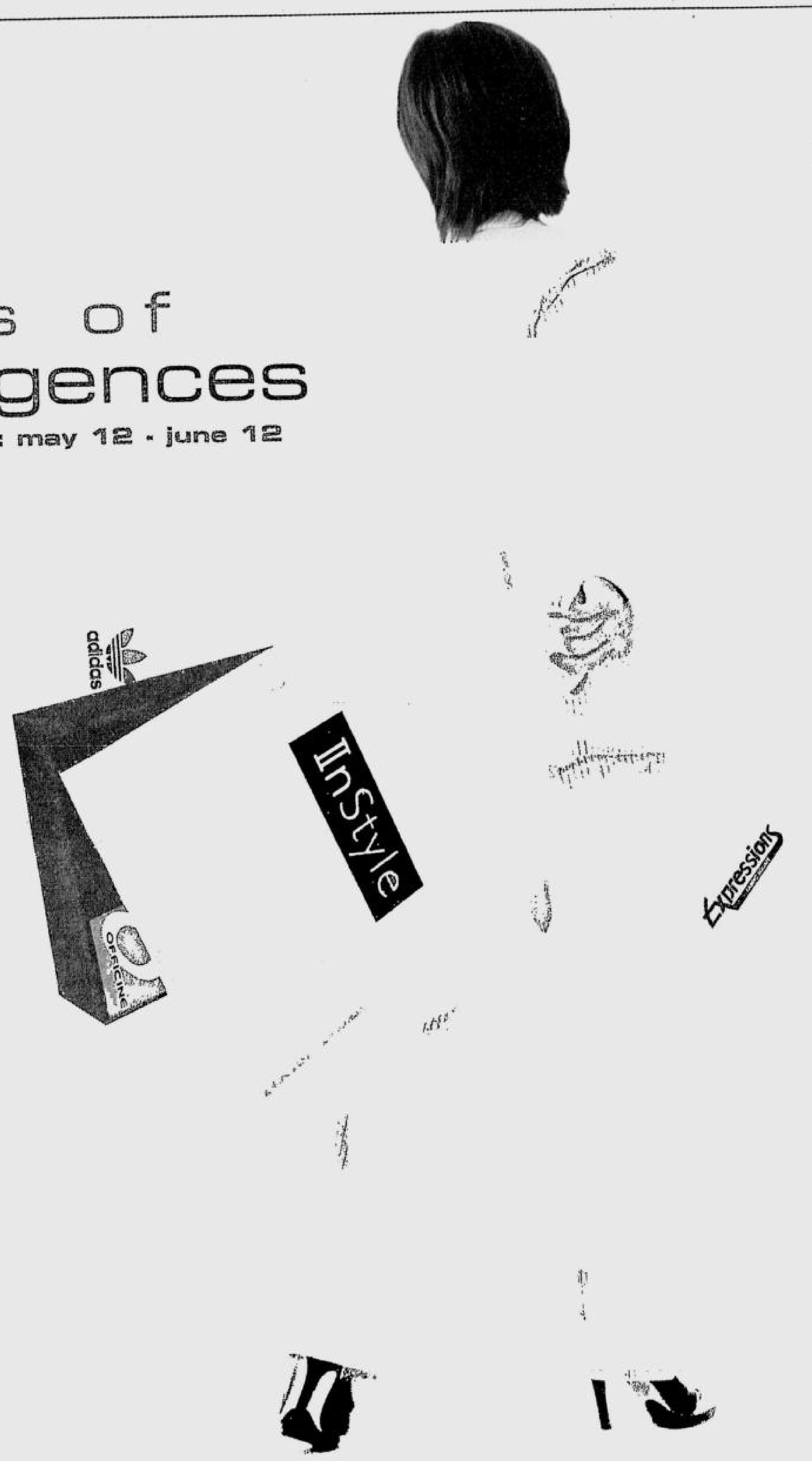
Stylish space

SPACE BOUTIQUE IS A HAVEN for ladies' apparel that is sure to make every fashion-loving gal's heart beat faster.

Space flaunts an array of ultra-stylish wearables for young, hip women. Take a pick from billowy cotton tops, puff-sleeved belted jackets, sheer sabrina blouses, floral bubble skirts, classic pique polo shirts, printed blouses, cargo-inspired skirts and pants.

Fresh, young, hip and chic, this clothing brand sets the trend and continues to whip up fresh, new clothing ideas.

Space Boutique is located at Robinsons Galleria, Robinsons Place Manila, SM City San Lazaro, SM Valenzuela, Rustan's Alabang Town Center, Rustan's Tower, and Rustan's Manila.



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Contributing Editor Ria Francisco-Prieto

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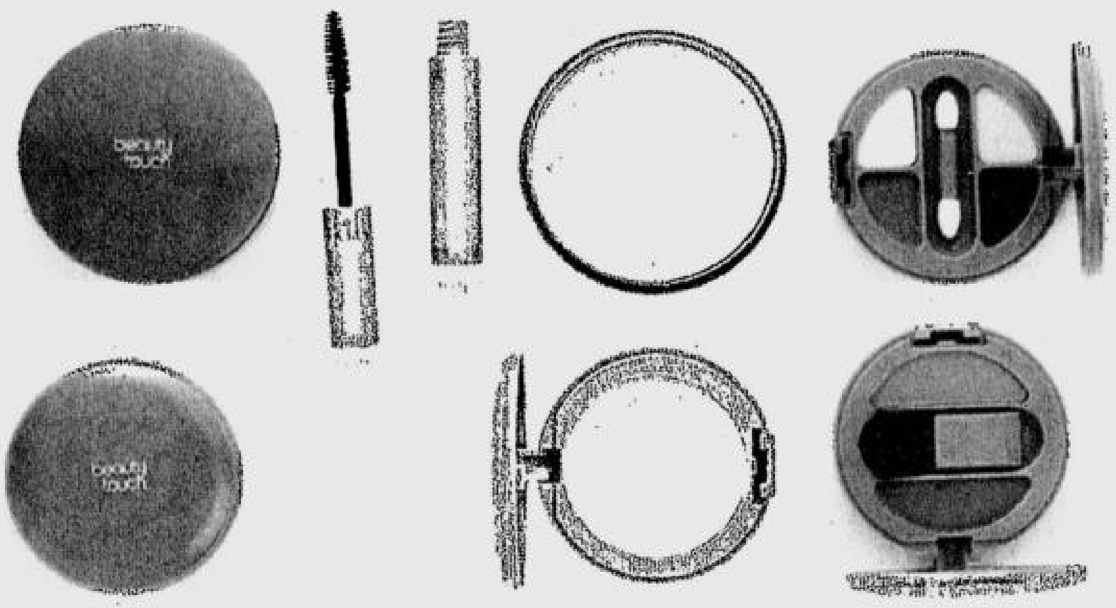
BEAUTY



BEAUTY Touch lipstick

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Pure love

HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY to all moms and soon to-be-moms!

I love kids. In fact I think I get along with them more than with adults. They have no pretensions, are easy to entertain and love cartoons as much as I do. I guess this carefree attitude slowly seeps away when you have to take care of the bills and think of the future. That is why I still want to be a playmate, not a parent. As of the moment, I don't have to make the kids sleep and take care of them when they get sick.

KNOCKOUT!

Ria Francisco-Prieto

A friend of mine has just recently found out that she is expecting. Everyone is so happy and excited for her, but certain things entered my head that I feel guilty about. It's actually three things—excessive weight gain, stretch marks and sagging. Not to mention the most important part, which is having to nurture a child who will be doing battle with you when they hit their teens.

I know it sounds a little selfish and narrow-minded but these are things our mothers have to contend with. I wish I could honestly say I embrace all these things because I am a Christian and a baby is always a blessing. But should I be happy about what happens after the "little person" is delivered?

So when my husband tells me how excited he is to have a baby, I remind him that I am the one who will get pregnant and a lot of changes will happen to me.

Psychologically and emotionally, I think I can handle the changes, but the physical ones I'm still trying to feel comfortable about. So what I do to prepare myself is to try to accept that these things would happen (excessive weight gain, stretch marks and sagging) so that when I do get pregnant, all I would have is happiness toward my situation and excitement for the baby.

Practical gift

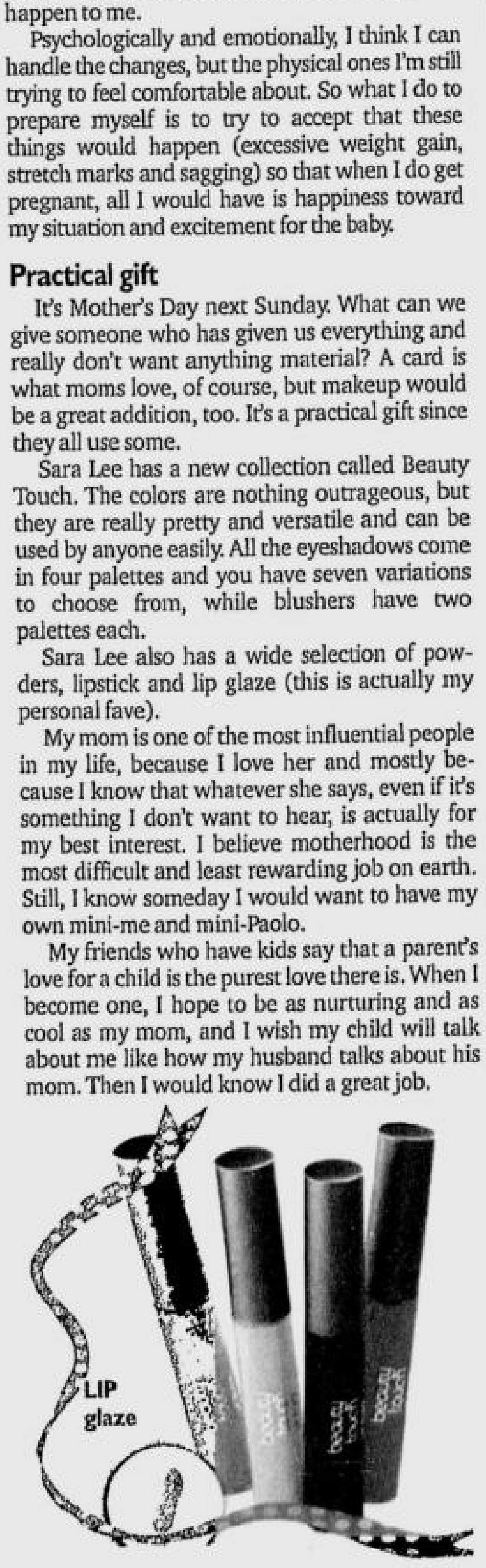
It's Mother's Day next Sunday. What can we give someone who has given us everything and really don't want anything material? A card is what moms love, of course, but makeup would be a great addition, too. It's a practical gift since they all use some.

Sara Lee has a new collection called Beauty Touch. The colors are nothing outrageous, but they are really pretty and versatile and can be used by anyone easily. All the eyeshadows come in four palettes and you have seven variations to choose from, while blushers have two palettes each.

Sara Lee also has a wide selection of powders, lipstick and lip glaze (this is actually my personal fave).

My mom is one of the most influential people in my life, because I love her and mostly because I know that whatever she says, even if it's something I don't want to hear, is actually for my best interest. I believe motherhood is the most difficult and least rewarding job on earth. Still, I know someday I would want to have my own mini-me and mini-Paolo.

My friends who have kids say that a parent's love for a child is the purest love there is. When I become one, I hope to be as nurturing and as cool as my mom, and I wish my child will talk about me like how my husband talks about his mom. Then I would know I did a great job.



LIP glaze

philosophy®: the gift of grace

a mom's love, like nature,
is forever loving,
asking for nothing in return

Beauty bar

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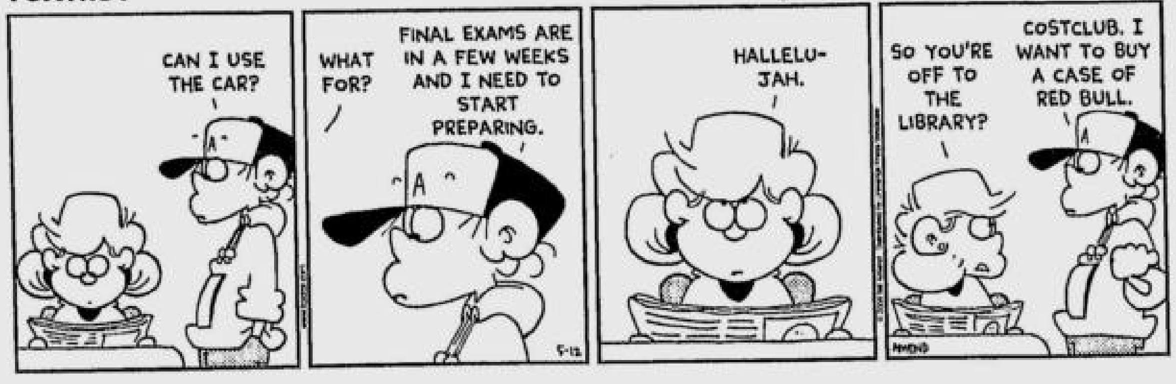
www.beautybar.com.ph

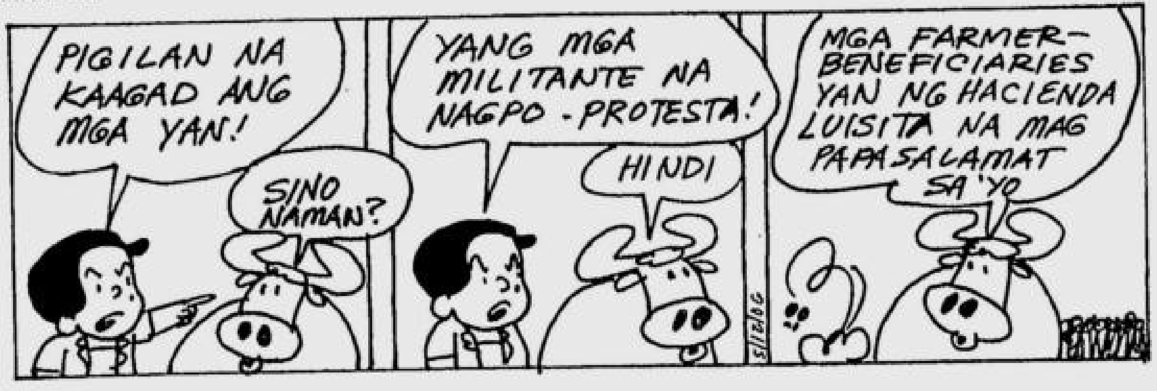
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


CAN I USE THE CAR?
WHAT FOR?
FINAL EXAMS ARE IN A FEW WEEKS AND I NEED TO START PREPARING.
HALLELU-JAH.
SO YOU'RE OFF TO THE LIBRARY?
COSTCLUB. I WANT TO BUY A CASE OF RED BULL.
5-12
AMEND

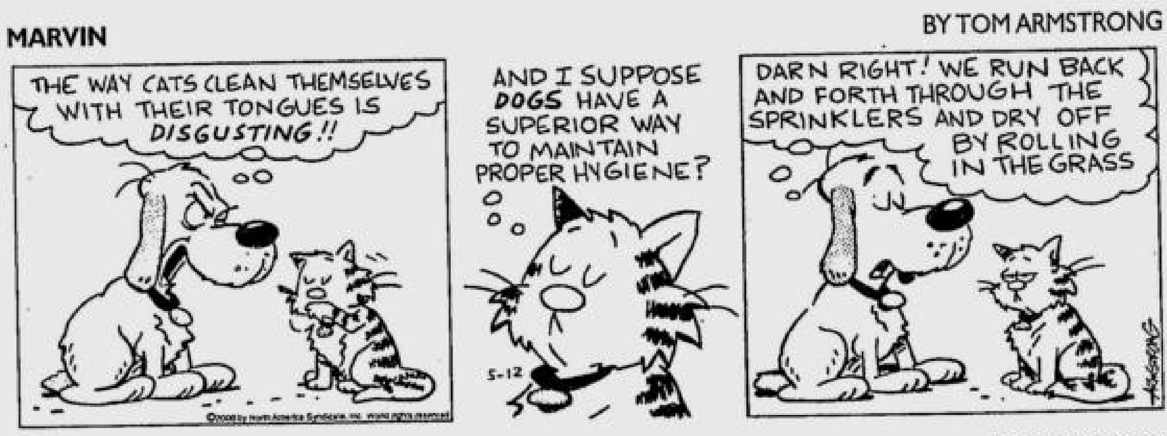
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


PIGILAN NA KAAGAD ANG MGA YAN!
SINO NAMAN?
YANG MGA MILITANTE NA NAGPO - PROTESTA!
HINDI
MGA FARMER-BENEFICIARIES YAN NG HACIENDA LUISITA NA MAG PAPASALAMAT SA'YO
5/12/06

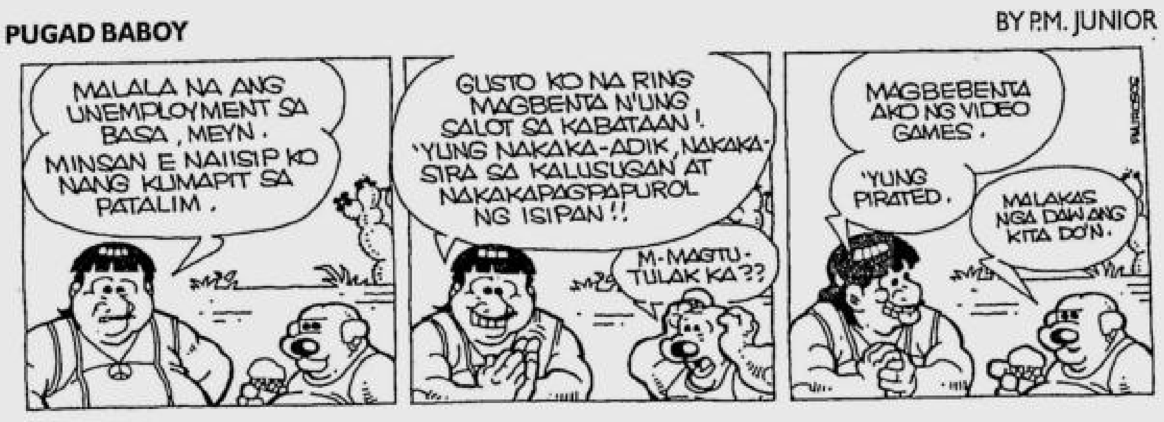
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


THE WAY CATS CLEAN THEMSELVES WITH THEIR TONGUES IS DISGUSTING!!
AND I SUPPOSE DOGS HAVE A SUPERIOR WAY TO MAINTAIN PROPER HYGIENE?
DARN RIGHT! WE RUN BACK AND FORTH THROUGH THE SPRINKLERS AND DRY OFF BY ROLLING IN THE GRASS
5-12

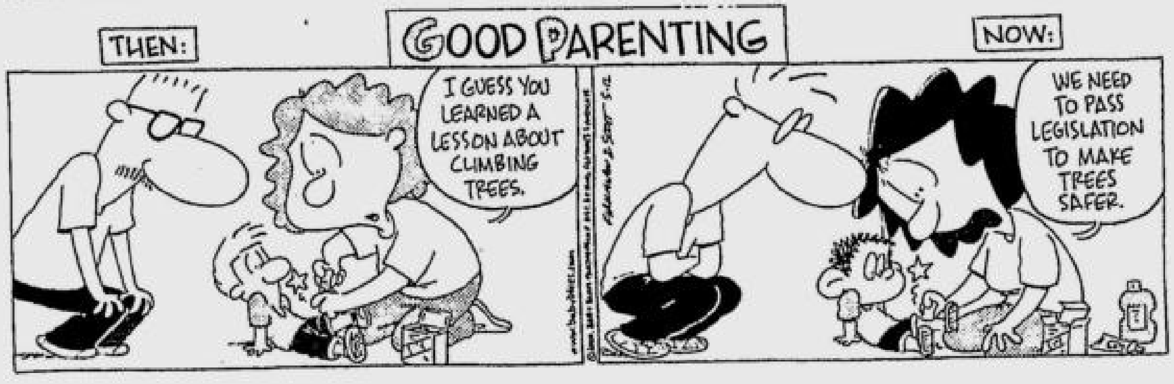
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


MALALA NA ANG UNEMPLOYMENT SA BASA, MEYN. MINSAN E NAIISIP KO NANG KUMAPIT SA PATALIM.
GUSTO KO NA RING MAGBENTA N'UNG SALOT SA KABATAAN! 'YUNG NAKAKA-ADIK, NAKAKA-SIRA SA KALUSUGAN AT NAKAKAPAGPAPUROL NG ISIPAN!!
M-MAGTU-TULAK KA??
MAGBEBENTA AKO NG VIDEO GAMES.
'YUNG PIRATED.
MALAKAS NGA DAW ANG KITA DO'N.

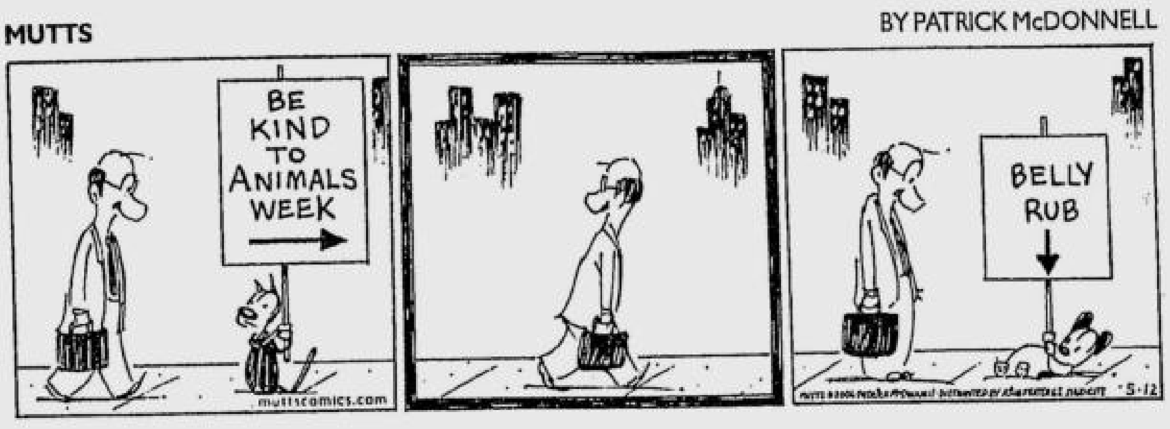
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


THEN:
GOOD PARENTING
NOW:
I GUESS YOU LEARNED A LESSON ABOUT CLIMBING TREES.
WE NEED TO PASS LEGISLATION TO MAKE TREES SAFER.

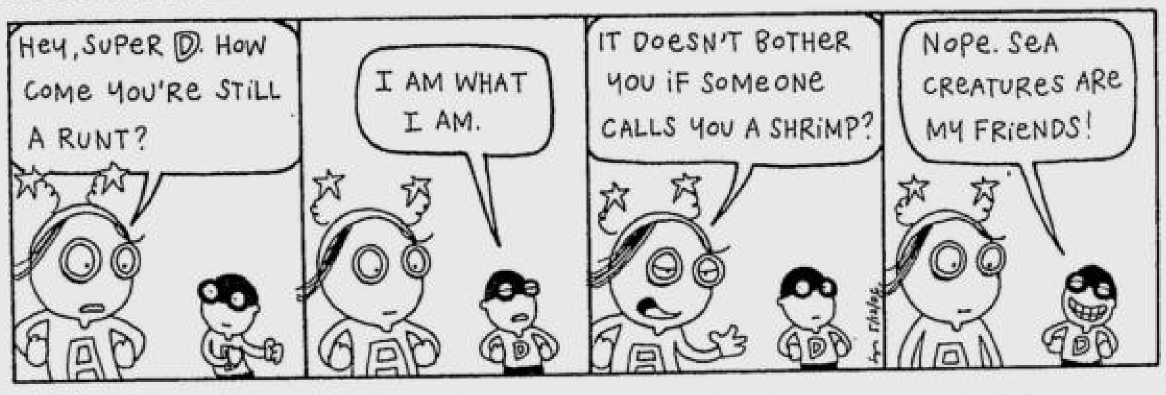
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


BE KIND TO ANIMALS WEEK
BELLY RUB
muttscomics.com
5-12

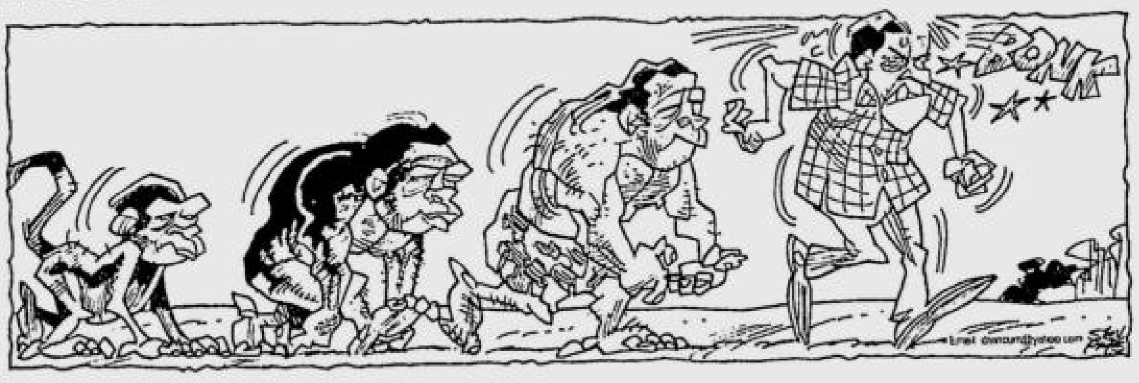
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


Hey, SuPer D. How Come You're STiLL A RUNT?
I AM WHAT I AM.
IT DoeSN'T BoTHer You iF SoMeoNe CALLS You A SHRiMP?
NoPe. SeA CReATURES ARe MY FRieNDS!

DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS



HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You have a fine mind. You're an independent thinker, and you do your homework before you act. You love to expose other people's sacred cows. You're playful, lighthearted and teasing, yet you're very serious about practically everything in life. You express yourself well and are often in a position of leadership. Increased solitude this year will help you learn something important.
Birthdate of: Katharine Hepburn, actress; George Carlin, comedian; Tony Hawk, skateboard superstar.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Financial matters or shared property might be a concern for you now. You're not sure whose interests to put first—your own or those of somebody else. (You cannot ignore your own.)

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Today's Full Moon is opposite your sign. (Every Full Moon is an opposition of the Sun and the Moon.) This means you have to be more patient with others right now. (No big deal.)

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Be tolerant and understanding of co-workers. People might be pushy and nervous today. (It's just a Full Moon thang.)

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): The demands of friends and the demands of your personal life might be in conflict today. You can't please everybody. Don't worry about this.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Things might be dicey when dealing with authority figures at home today. Today's Full Moon puts stress on your domestic world. (This tension is gone in 48 hours.)

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): This is a mildly accident-prone day. The Full Moon will excite some people and distract them when driving, walking, whatever. Therefore, take precautions and slow down.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): In one way, this is a good day for business. Just make sure you see both sides of the situation. You could boost your earnings, but don't be pushy.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Today's Full Moon is the only Full Moon in your sign all year. That's why you feel more intense and emotional about everything! Relax—it's gone in a day or two.

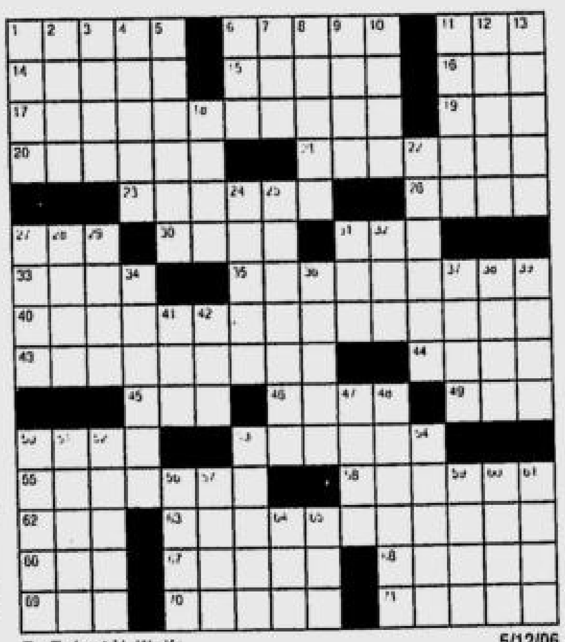
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Maya Angelou said, "No one can make you feel inferior without your consent." Keep this in mind today. Dispel any feelings of self-doubt. They will disappear quickly.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Friends and groups might demand more of. you than you can give. Don't worry about this. You don't have to please everyone. If you please yourself, you'll cover 75 percent of everybody else.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Authority figures are demanding today. You're not sure what to make of it. If possible, do nothing. Just smile. In a few days, your course of action will be clear.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Avoid religious and political arguments with others today. They will just go in circles. You'll be preaching to deaf ears or to the choir.

DAILY CROSSWORD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By Robert H. Wolfe
North Woodmere, NY

5/12/06

ACROSS
1 Map collection
6 Clifton and Karrie
11 Gotcha!
14 Oxeye ___
15 "The Jetsons" boy
16 Research rm.
17 Garments adorning duck feathers?
19 Fridays' lead-in?
20 Tranquilize
21 Cut canines
23 Yiddish man with fortitude
26 Sharpen
27 D-Day craft
30 Legendary tale
31 Mine extraction
33 Cornelia ___ Skinner
35 Vegetarian rule
40 Footwear taken orally?
43 Say, "All in favor..."
44 Scottish hillside
45 Play poodle?
46 Dutch cheese
49 Lyric poem
50 Sprinkle after a shower
53 Oil-rich area
55 Piled up haphazardly
58 Ill
62 Also
63 Men's garments, made perfectly?
66 Theol. belief
67 Shenanigan
68 Harry Hamlin's Lisa
69 Tin Man's tool
70 New Age pianist
71 RBI and ERA

DOWN
1 Appends
2 Biblical weed
3 Made stuff up?
4 Indian state
5 CBS part
6 Director Craven
7 Yore
8 Stock
9 Boxer Riddick
10 "Auld Lang ___"
11 Regardless of the fact that, for short
12 Actress Uta
13 Endure
18 Start of a counting-out rhyme
22 1951 Broderick Crawford film
24 Secretarial skill, in brief
25 Gab
27 In a fog
28 Greek portico
29 Clock sound
31 Individual
32 CD-___
34 Drawing draft
36 Bara of silent movies
37 Continental cash
38 Somewhat
39 "Of ___ I Sing"
41 ___ Paulo
42 Leafy climber
47 Lie next to
48 Secondary areas of study
50 Crownlet
51 Tack on
52 Soup spoon
53 Of bees
54 Anticipate
56 Spot
57 Mystique
59 Sicilian volcano
60 Fasting period
61 Where kine dine
64 Station from Tenn.
65 Travel on snow

Thursday's Puzzle Solved

M	A	E	■	P	A	C	K	■	R	O	L	A	N	D
E	B	B	■	U	P	O	N	■	O	N	A	G	E	R
A	B	O	U	T	T	H	E	■	B	E	W	A	R	E
T	A	N	G	O	■	E	W	E	R	■	C	R	O	W
■	■	■	L	U	C	S	■	R	O	T	O	■	■	■
O	N	L	Y	T	H	I	N	G	Y	O	U	C	A	N
R	A	F	■	S	A	V	E	■	■	P	R	O	M	O
E	R	N	S	■	T	E	A	S	L	■	T	R	A	M
A	C	T	E	D	■	■	T	W	A	S	■	G	I	S
D	O	O	N	A	S	H	O	E	S	T	R	I	N	G
■	■	■	O	I	F	O	■	E	F	E	E	■	■	■
P	A	H	R	■	T	E	S	T	■	R	I	A	T	A
A	N	O	I	N	T	■	I	S	T	O	T	R	I	P
S	T	A	T	U	E	■	P	O	O	L	■	U	T	E
S	E	D	A	T	E	■	S	P	Y	S	■	M	I	X

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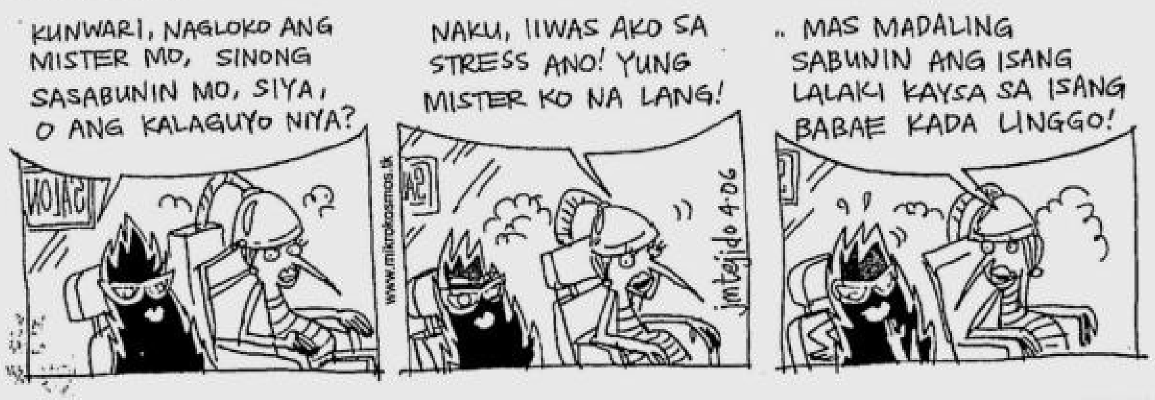
5/12/06

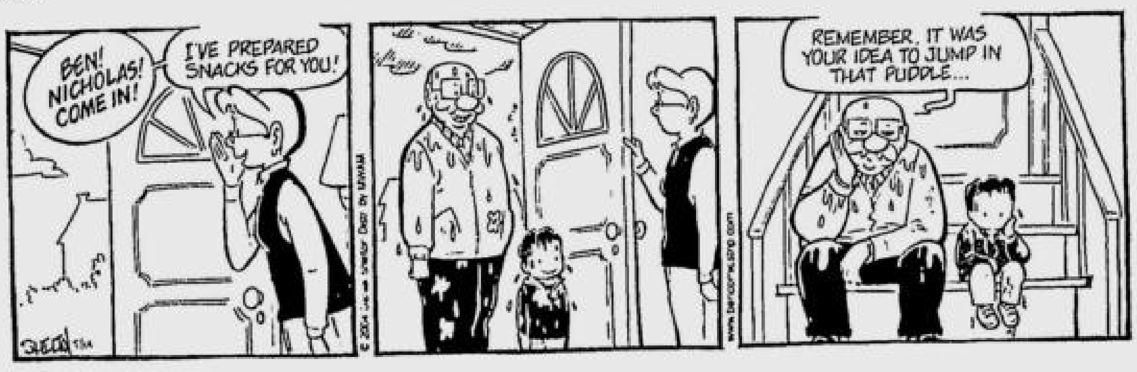
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


KUNWARI, NAGLOKO ANG MISTER MO, SINONG SASABUNIN MO, SIYA, O ANG KALAGUYO NIYA?
NAKU, IIWAS AKO SA STRESS ANO! YUNG MISTER KO NA LANG!
.. MAS MADALING SABUNIN ANG ISANG LALAKI KAYSA SA ISANG BABAE KADA LINGGO!
SALON
www.mikrokosmos.tk
jmtejido 4-06

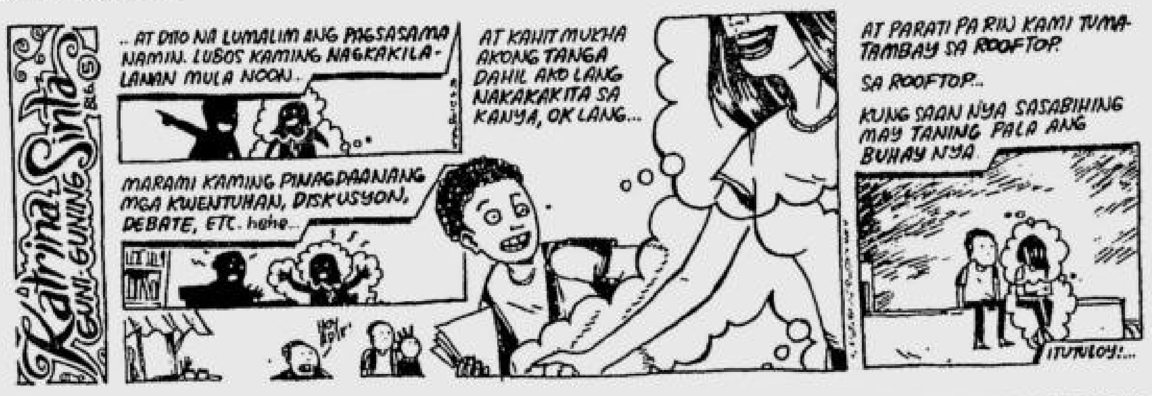
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


BEN! NICHOLAS! COME IN!
I'VE PREPARED SNACKS FOR YOU!
REMEMBER, IT WAS YOUR IDEA TO JUMP IN THAT PUDDLE...

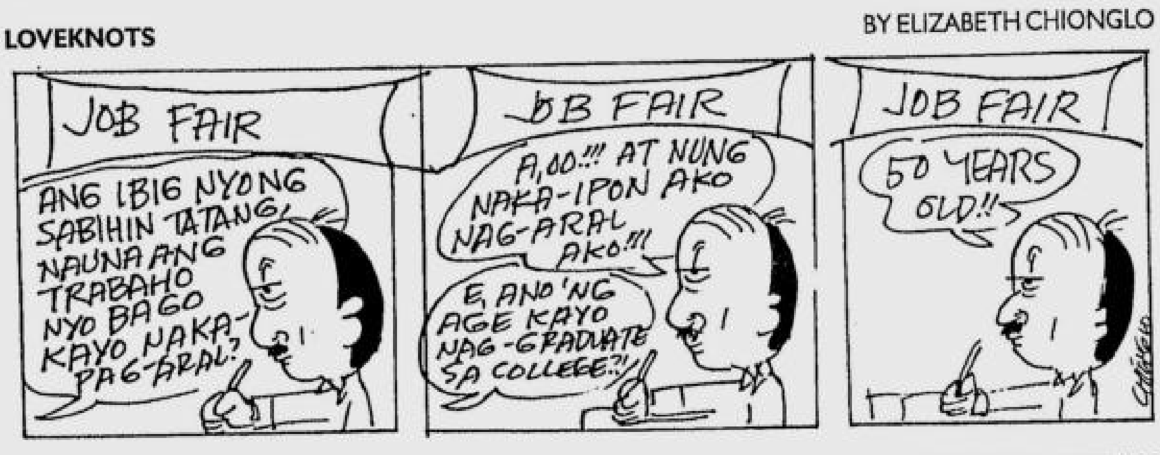
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


Katrina Sinta
GUNI-GUNING
.. AT DITO NA LUMALIM ANG PAGSASAMA NAMIN. LUBOS KAMING NAGKAKILALANAN MULA NOON..
MARAMI KAMING PINAGDAANANG MGA KWENTUHAN, DISKUSYON, DEBATE, ETC. hehe..
AT KAHIT MUKHA AKONG TANGA DAHIL AKO LANG NAKAKAKITA SA KANYA, OK LANG...
AT PARATI PA RIN KAMI TUMATAMBAY SA ROOFTOP.
SA ROOFTOP..
KUNG SAAN NYA SASABIHING MAY TANING PALA ANG BUHAY NYA.
ITUTULOY!...

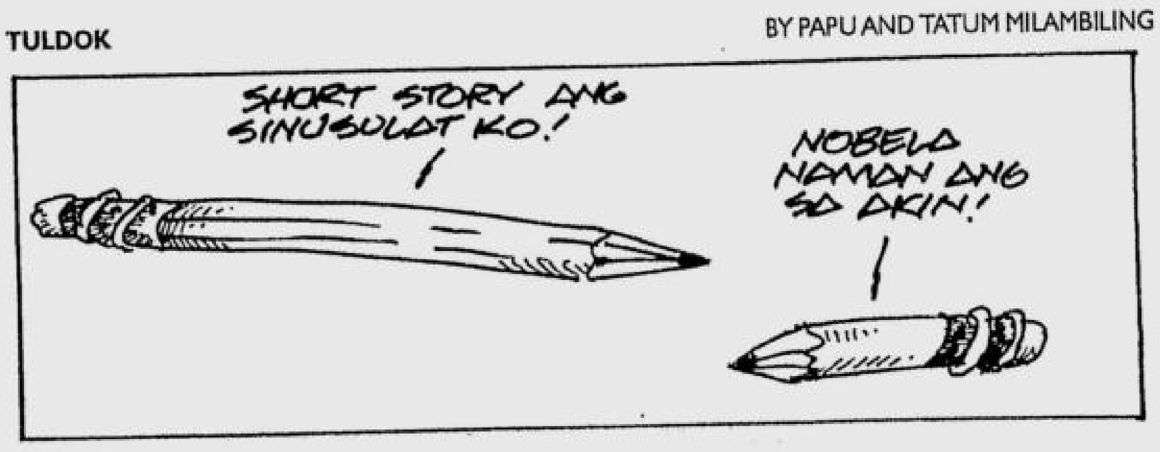
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO

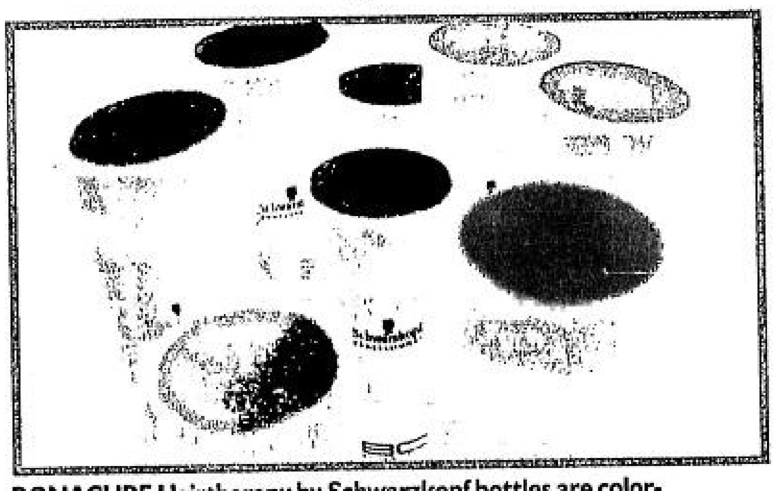

JOB FAIR
ANG IBIG NYONG SABIHIN TATANG, NAUNA ANG TRABAHO NYO BAGO KAYO NAKAPAG-ARAL?
JOB FAIR
A, OO!!! AT NUNG NAKA-IPON AKO NAG-ARAL AKO!!!
E, ANO 'NG AGE KAYO NAG-GRADUATE SA COLLEGE?!
JOB FAIR
50 YEARS OLD!!

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


SHORT STORY ANG SINUSULAT KO!
NOBELA NAMAN ANG SA AKIN!

Rx for healthy hair



BONACURE Hairtherapy by Schwarzkopf bottles are color-coordinated to easily recognize the specific product for your hair type.

SCHWARZKOPF PROfessional introduces the the all-new Bonacure range of hair care, a sophisticated line of customized treatments that delivers outstanding and enduring hair beauty.

Recent research shows that skin and hair have astoundingly similar properties. Just like skin, everybody's hair is different. Bonacure offers a complete and new range of therapies tailor-made to treat individual hair care problems in exactly the same way we look after our skin.

Bonacure's new range of hair care products provides in-depth and long-term and effective therapies that treat the root of the problem rather than mask them with quick-fix solutions.

Besides the innovative Amino Acid Technology which works from the inside, the ApHinity Technology focuses on the hair surface. Together, the revolutionary and sophisticated Glycine Amino Acid formula and ApHinity cleanse, care and treat the hair.

Bonacure's sleekly packaged products are delicately fragranced with subtle citrus and light floral notes to leave the hair feeling clean, fresh and cared for.

The hair therapy range consists of the following products:

Repair Rescue. The active CuraTec proteins deliver outstanding results, reinforcing and restructuring hair from within.

Color Save. This rich, luxurious range for colored hair serves a dual purpose: to undo damage caused by harsh chemicals and protect color from fading, keeping hair healthy, alive and vibrant.

Moisture Kick. A rich and intensive care system for dry, naturally coarse hair. The Milk-Protein-Complex and Amino Acid Therapy rehydrate even the driest and most fragile hair.

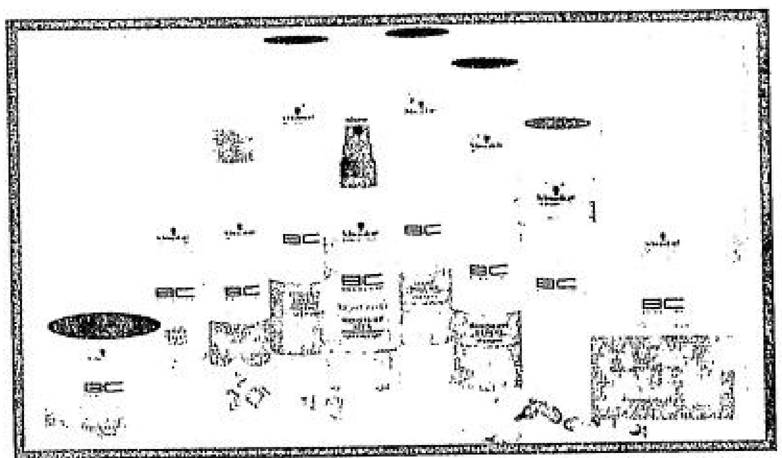
Smooth Control. This remedy is specifically designed to tame even the unruliest of hair types. It smoothes and heals unmanageable, frizzy hair, leaving it silky, shiny and under control.

Light Volume. An ultra-light range of therapies for normal to fine hair that nourishes and protects without weighing the hair down. The care treatments contain Light-Body-Complex to gently condition the hair without overburdening it.

Hair and Scalp Expert. This range of delicate hair therapies treat all hair and scalp problems, from dandruff and sensitive scalps to hair loss, with their gentle formulations. For the first time, Bonacure offers an ultra-effective and safe hair growth serum that deliver superior, long-term results.

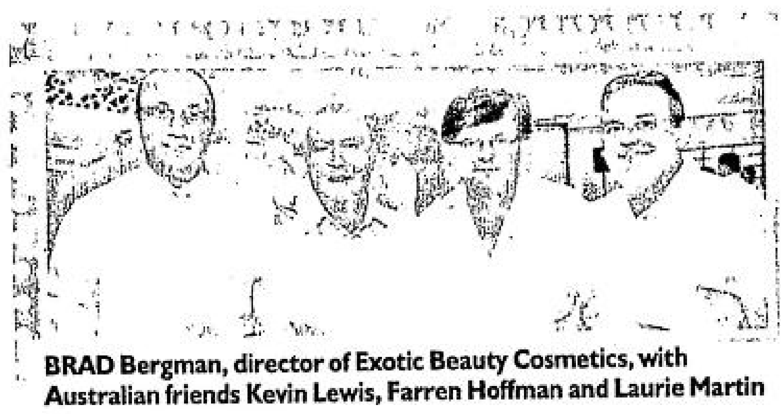
Bonacure by Schwarzkopf Professionals is exclusively distributed by Top Style Marketing, Inc., with office at Unit 25PA Eisenhower Tower, Greenhills, San Juan (tel. 7231763/7268507 to 08). It is available only in salons.

HEALTHY, beautiful hair courtesy of Bonacure Hairtherapy



BONACURE, a sophisticated new line of customized hair treatments from Schwarzkopf Professional

SMOOTH control, light volume and great colors



BRAD Bergman, director of Exotic Beauty Cosmetics, with Australian friends Kevin Lewis, Farren Hoffman and Laurie Martin

RIKKI Kwek, Tin Magsaysay, Eye Majic distributor Jerianne Ejercito and Chesca Litton

Instant eyeshadow now in Manila

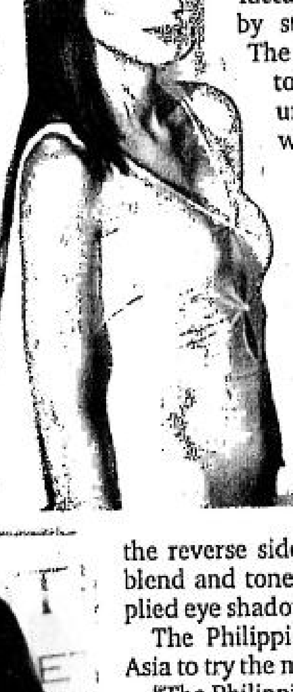
IF THEY MUST WEAR MAKEUP, MOST women will automatically reach for their blush, powder or lipstick. Eyeshadow often comes last, because not only is it difficult to put on, especially in a moving vehicle, it also takes a lot more time and effort, because women have to blend the colors properly so as not to end up looking like something the cat dragged through a cosmetic counter.

A new product tries to eliminate the hassles associated with putting on eyeshadow.

Launched recently at the Kalayaan Hall of Club Filipino in Greenhills, Eye Majic Instant Eye Shadow has been brought into the country from Australia by Eye Majic Philippines director Gina Ledesma and distributor Jerianne Ejercito.

The trade and press launch was hosted by Chesca Litton and Rikki Kwek. A fashion show featured the creations of designer Frederick Peralta.

Eye Majic comes in seven different, pre-selected shades that take the hassle out of blending.



With Eye Majic, one does not have to worry about using brushes or applicators that may be dirty or infected. Eye Majic has a "zero contamination" factor, since the strips are manufactured, packaged and sealed by state-of-the-art machinery. The product remains untouched by human hands until it is used by the person who buys it.

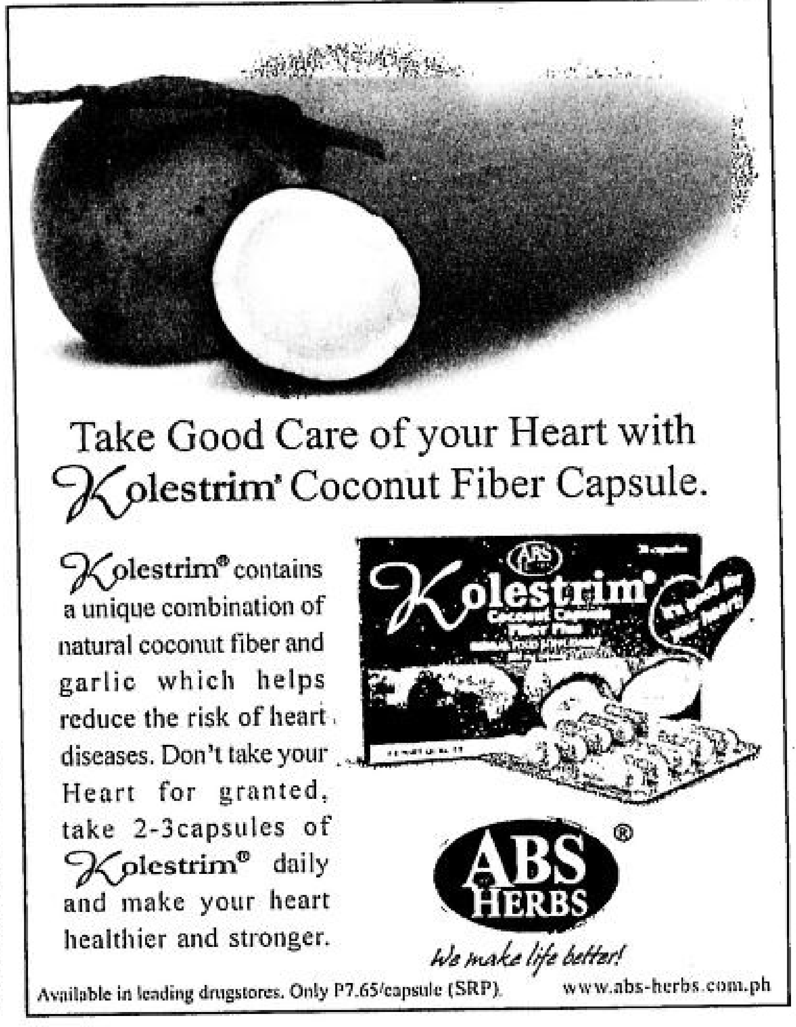
It is easy to use. The colors come on a strip that one applies to the eyelid. One should simply close the eyelid and apply the Eye Majic strip as close to the base of the eyelid as possible. Then using comfortable pressure, one holds the strip firmly for about four seconds, then slide it across the eyelid. One can then use the reverse side of the Eye Majic strip to blend and tone the outer areas of the applied eye shadow for a softer look.

The Philippines is the first country in Asia to try the new beauty product.

"The Philippines has been chosen as our gateway to the rest of Asia. It was our country of choice due to our long association and close relationship with our Philippine business partner as well as our own personal affection for the country itself where the English language is so widely used and understood," said Brad Bergman, director of Exotic Beauty Cosmetics and manufacturer of Eye Majic.

For dealership inquiries, call 8680525 and 5296469. E-mail gltrading@yahoo.com, eye_majic@yahoo.com or visit website www.exoticbeauty.com.au

ROCK Mamone, Italian inventor of Eye Majic, demonstrates how the product instantly enhances the eyes.



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Kolestrim® contains a unique combination of natural coconut fiber and garlic which helps reduce the risk of heart diseases. Don't take your Heart for granted, take 2-3capsules of Kolestrim® daily and make your heart healthier and stronger.

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THE BODY SHOP®

10TH YEAR ANNIVERSARY

BUY 1 ITEM
GET THE 2ND ITEM*
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* ITEM OF LOWER OR EQUAL VALUE
SELECTED ITEMS ONLY

PRESENT RECEIPT AT THE CASHIER TO AVAIL OF THE PROMO.
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PROMO PERIOD: MAY 5 - 30, 2006
PER DTI-NCR PERMIT #1126 SERIES OF 2006

THE BODY SHOP

Sanctuary in the city

MAKEOVER 911

Kinny Salas

HAVE YOU HAD the urge to get away from it all? Just get up in the middle of a work week and escape the city?

I had tried it several times but had always chickened out because I was scared to leave behind my responsibilities. Don't emergencies usually pop up when you're far away?

Besides, I am a city girl at heart and the fresh air plus the peace and quiet of the country might drive me nuts after just a few hours. If it doesn't, the long commute home surely will.

There is a new salon called Philosophy by Mikaela that allows me to have my cake and eat it, too. It is located on A. Arnaiz Avenue (Pasay Road).

From the elevator you go all the way up to the penthouse (5/F) and as the lift door opens, you will find yourself at the salon's elegant foyer.

The interiors look very indulgent, in accord with the decadent '80s "Dynasty" flair. You would feel like Joan Collins as Alexis Carrington Colby in a full-length mink coat getting off the elevator, opening to her luxurious penthouse apartment.

The salon has a pure oxygen environment, which is even better than what passes for fresh air in some provinces, so you really don't smell a thing and you feel more relaxed within minutes of settling in.

Natural light filters through the big treated windows without the oppressive rays of the hot sun. As you look out, you will see the cars zooming past, but will not hear a decibel of traffic noise as the place is also soundproof.

The place is also a strictly no-smoking zone. But for those who must have a light, they can go to the well-lit terrace.

Now we go to the fun part: treatments and services. The moment I walked in, I was thrilled to see Eddie Magadia, the first professional hairdresser to ever touch my hair when I first started writing this column.

What I love about Eddie is that he develops a personal relationship with every client's hair. His gift is such that the moment you walk in the door he has just about sized you up and he instinctively knows what to do with your hair.

If you have any special requests—you want to look thinner, you revise the shape of your face—he can oblige. He has yet to fail me in the six times he has handled my hair.

Beautiful eyes

Theirs is the most undetectable eyelash extensions for P2,050 that I intend to pitch it to my mom and sister as a Mother's Day gift.

Only in this column will my friends now know my mascara was not the item that deserved the credit for my long, dark and perfectly curved lashes. The credit goes to the real hair that tapers off at the tips like real lashes.

People said I was blooming without makeup and that something was different about me, but they couldn't pinpoint what I had done. They really liked my eyes. For my part, it was liberating not to be a slave to mascara and an eyelash curler. (Rozelle of Philosophy did my lashes, really).

Extensions last for two months and you are discouraged from rubbing the eye area when washing the face. The extension is perfect for summer because you can do away with eye makeup altogether.

Honestly, it's too hot to wear makeup and the one at the eye area just ends up smearing and creasing on greasy faces, anyway. I just put a cheek gel and sheer lipstick and I'm out the door.

Those who want less maintenance may opt for an eyelash perm instead for P850. It will also last two months and make mascara application a delight because your lashes are separated and the hassle of curling is no longer a factor.

For the eyebrow-obsessed, May of Philosophy will thread them into glamorous arches that will brighten your face and serve as an instant eye-lift. It really is the cheapest eye job available.

Philosophy also has the favorite Chinese medicine treatments, a favorite of celebrities, such as acupuncture facelift and Moxa Ventoza or cupping at the back (they're favorites of Madonna and Gwyneth Paltrow).

I am scheduled for the acupuncture facelift. I will tell you how it goes!

ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

For a true Hollywood feel, Philosophy even offers limousine service if you are within the Makati. So if your mom or wife works or lives in the area, you can have her picked up and pampered for a one-of-a-kind Mother's Day treat. Call 8921574.

HEAVEN on bare skin

Stars' secrets revealed

WHAT IS THE SECRET BEHIND Angelina Jolie's radiant skin or Jessica Alba's beautiful plump lips?

Jolie and Alba are just two celebrities who use various Lush products to help keep their film-star looks.

Alba uses Lush's Honey Trap lip balm (P425), a moisturizing and softening balm full of honey and beeswax to soften, plus antioxidant-rich cold-pressed wheatgerm oil and olive oil. To help plump up the lips, Lush uses peppermint essential oil.

Jolie gets help in keeping her skin flawless from Lush's Ultrabland face cleanser (P475). The product has light, peanut oil-based and extremely effective formulation, lifting and dissolving dirt and excess sebum and leaving the skin plumped up and soft.

Lindsay Lohan uses Lush's Breath of Fresh Air toner (P575) to give her skin a refreshing spritz when necessary. Made with Spring water, fresh seawater and aloe gel, along with mineral-rich seaweed, the toning spritzer prevents dehydration, while moisturizing and softening the skin.

Kylie Minogue buys Buffy (P375), the Lush product for keeping bums and thighs soft and smooth.

Best used in the shower, Buffy has shea butter that melts over skin. The ground aduki beans, rice and almonds will scrub and polish the skin, leaving it in prime condition. The product also contains lavender and lemon essential oils for toning.

All products are available at Lush shops nationwide.

Lush is exclusively distributed by Stores Specialists, Inc. Lush boutiques are in Glorietta 4, Power Plant Mall, Shangri-La Mall and Greenbelt 3. Visit www.lush.com.ph

DREAM CREAM

LUSH
Dream Cream

Happy Mother's Day!

MOM Queen of Hearts

ACROSS
1. Filipino mom
4. Abel's mom
7. Virgin _____
9.___ Maria
11. Movie about picnic insects
12. Spanish Mrs.
14. Tourist trophy abbv.
15. Fitness center
18. Mineral source
19. Electrical unit
20. Go in
22. Males
24. Interjection
25. Self
26. Jose P. Rizal
28. Each (abbr)
29. Poetry, painting etc.
30. Medical letters
31. Interjections
33. Engineering course
35. Preposition
36. Blood pumper
37. In favor of
40. Radium
41. Onionlike veggie
42. Female deer
44. Veggie in a pod
45. Paid notices
46. Female horses
48. Tiny and dusty
50. Mauna ___
51. The word "in" in Spanish
52. Mother's month
53. C___ news network

DOWN
1. Pampangueño's mom
2. Filipino mom
3. ___ deco
5. Abbr. Of variant
6. Expanded Value Added Tax
8. Alphabet ending
10. Biblical queen
13. _____ of hearts
15. G in GMA
16. Joan Crawford's bio
17. Pearl source
21. Mother ___
23. Norse myth
26. Interjection
27. Spy org.
32. Interjection
34. Period
38. Musical note
39. Japanese mom
41. Meadow
42. British title
43. Norse god
44. Afternoon
47. Long period
49. Printer's measure

Complete the puzzle. Present to claim your double treat on Mother's Day, Sunday, May 14, 2006!

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2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

Hip and happening moms

ON LEXI: Striped, V-neck top, black skirt, black-and-white polka-dot scarf and gold chain accessories by Debenhams

ON APPLES: Striped mustard-yellow spaghetti cocktail dress by Jessica, accessories by Red Herring at Debenhams. On Sam: Checkered pocket detailed polo and denim skirt with accessories, all by Red Herring at Debenhams

AS MOTHER'S DAY DRAWS NEAR, Stores Specialists Inc. and Rustan Marketing Specialty Inc. pay tribute to two hip, young yet extraordinary mothers: model, INQUIRER fashion columnist and interior designer Apples Aberin-Sadhwani, and magazine editor and radio host Lexi Shulze-Berenguer-Testa.

They are true examples of how the contemporary mom can balance several roles while staying absolutely chic.

Apples Aberin-Sadhwani, mother of two, is the perfect image of a cool mom. While she is generally the kind to keep a casual and friendly relationship with her children, she also knows when it's time to put her foot down, and set the limit.

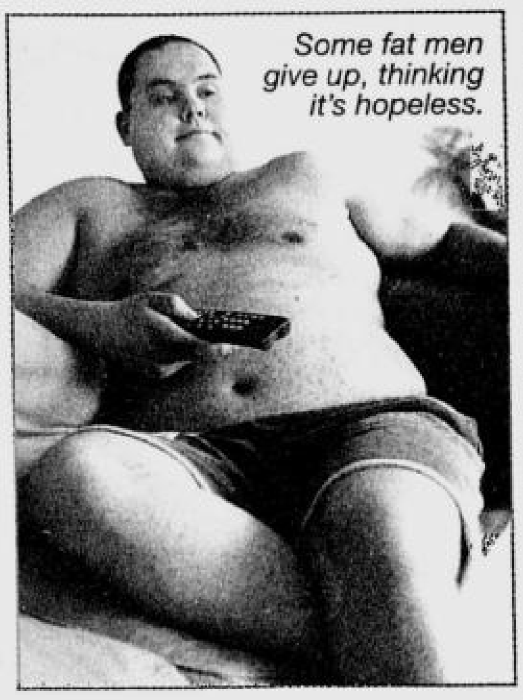
"I think it's important to be a friend and still make them understand that I am still their mom whom they can talk to and turn to for advice," she says.

During a shoot with her 14-year-old daughter Sam, she shares how her flair for fashion has become good common ground for weekly bonding sessions spent at the mall.

"We find the time to go to the mall, just the two of us. We shop or simply look around."

"Sometimes, I find that several articles of clothing of mine are in her closet. Of course, she has her own fashion

HIP/ H2



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MAY 6 - STARMALL EDSA
MAY 13 - STARMALL LAS PIÑAS
MAY 27 - METROPOLIS STAR ALABANG

MALL EVENTS THIS MAY

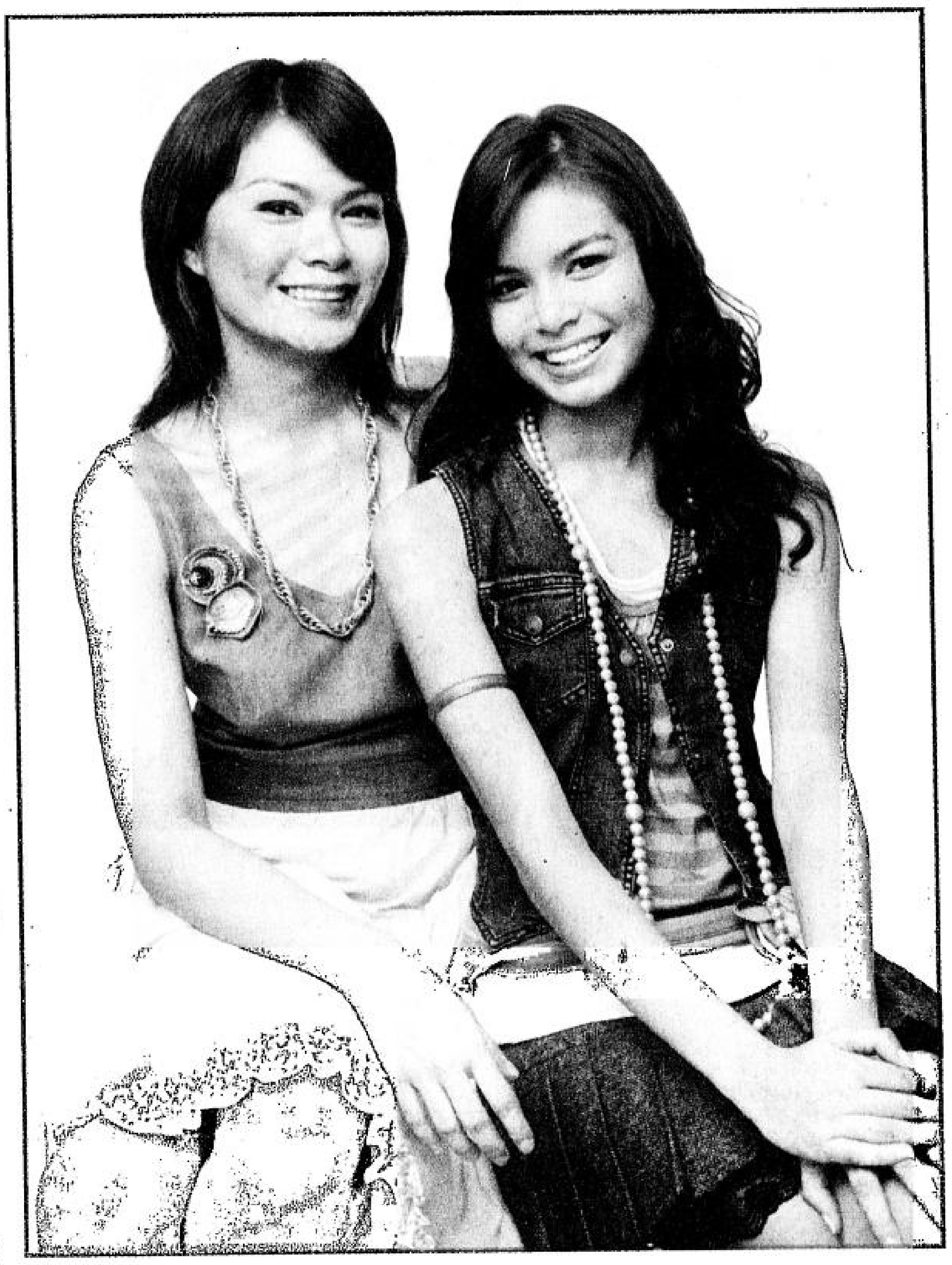
starmall EDSA-SHAW
Tel. 718-1886
May 1, Arts & Crafts: Basic Painting & Caricature Making, 2/L, 4pm
May 6, SIDE A Concert, 2/L, 8pm
May 6, Summer Bikini Nights, Cuba Libre, 2/L, 8pm
May 7, Stardanz 2006 Grand Finals, 2/L 4pm
May 11 & 18, Kiddie Star Model Search, 2/L, 4pm
May 12, Center for Pop Music Recital, 2/L, 4pm
May 13, Kidding Aside Fashion Show by: RDH Entertainment, 2/L, 4pm
May 14, Mom's Day-out with Ruby Rodriguez, 2/L 3pm
May 19-21, "Aquaria" Exhibit of different Aquarium Set-up & Fishes, 2/L, 10am-8pm
May 20 & 27, Storytelling Activity @ Books for Less, 2/L, 4pm
May 21, Dream Concert by: Center for Pop Music, 2/L, 4pm
May 27, Finds Superstore Grand Launching with Christian Bautista and Jennylyn Mercado, G/L, 4pm
May 28, Kiddie Star Model Search Grand Finals & Flores de Mayo, 2/L, 2pm
May 28-31, "Maskterpiece" Exhibit, G/L, 10am-8pm
Tuesdays, Stand-up Comedy @ Cuba Libre, 2/L, 8pm
Fridays, Live Bands @ Cuba Libre, 2/L, 8pm

METROPOLIS ALABANG star
Tel. 850-3845
May 1, Arts & Crafts Livelihood "No Bake Cake", 3/L, 1pm
May 5, 12, 19 & 26, Indak sa Kalikasan '06 Dance Contest Eliminations, 2/L, 4pm
May 7, Jed Madela mall tour, 2/L, 6pm
May 13-14, Mary Kay Make-up Demo, 3/L 4pm
May 13-14, Nutrition Counseling for Mom & Kids, 3/L, 10am
May 13, SMB Summer Babaran: Wet n' Wild Party, Open Parking, 7pm
May 14, Strings Serenade @ Kinse Lang & Max's, 5pm
May 20, Family Fun Game Show with Ruby Rodriguez, 3/L, 4pm
May 20, Martial Arts Demo featuring Wushu, 3/L, 2pm
May 27, SIDE A Concert, 4/L, 8pm
May 28, Starland Mallwide Santacruzan & Little Miss Starland '06, 3pm
Mondays & Tuesdays, Live Bands @ Mark's Bar, 2/L, 6pm
Wednesdays, Nightlife Acoustics, 2/L, 6pm
Thursdays, Stand-up Comedy @ Mark's Bar, 2/L, 8pm

starmall LAS PIÑAS
Tel. 872-5249
May 4, Destiny Cable Raffle Draw, 2/L, 2pm
May 6, 13, 20 & 26, Summer Fun Time @ Books for Less, 3pm
May 6, 13, 20 & 27, Value Point Modeling Search, 3pm
May 6 & 20, Clash Dance: Belly Dancing vs. Street Dancing, My Spa Fitness, 1pm
May 13, SIDE A Concert, 2/L, 8pm
May 13 & 27, Aero-Marathon for Moms, My Spa Fitness, 1pm
May 14, Mom's Serenade @ Figaro, Dencios & Gloria Maris, 6pm
May 18, Zarzuela de Bacolod, 2/L, 7pm
May 19, Bamboo the City Tour, 2/L, 7pm
May 27, SMB Summer Babaran, Open Parking, 7pm
May 27, Monterey MVP on Wheels Cooking Demo, Open Parking, 1pm
Tuesdays, Ballroom Nights @ Mark's Bar, 7pm
Wednesdays, Live Music @ The Strip, 7pm
Fridays, Acoustic Nights @ Mark's Bar, 7pm
Saturdays, Live Music @ The Strip featuring Divas!, 7pm

MINT-GREEN trench coat with belt by Jessica

ON APPLES: Brown cocktail dress with patch details by Jessica, bracelets by Red Herring at Debenhams. On Sam: Denim vest over striped racerback top, skirt, necklace and bangle, all by Red Herring at Debenhams



Two women exemplify how the contemporary mom can balance several roles while staying absolutely chic

Hip and happening moms

From page H1

statement but I know that to some degree she takes after my style. I also know that she's waiting to fit into my shoes!"

Lexi Schulze-Berenguer-Testa, on the other hand, while quite new to the world of parenting, is all smiles as she talks about her 8-month-old bundle of joy, Alba.

One of the most beautiful faces to grace the pages of magazines and commercials, Lexi has always been the type to go around town in bohemian and funky clothes that are reflective of her dynamic personality and passion for her the arts. And this is how she remains.

"Style, more than a piece of clothing, is an attitude. I am very comfortable in my skin. I don't feel the need to impress or conform," she says.

With little Alba now in her arms, Lexi says, "Being a parent brings an internal shift which I don't tend to express through the way I dress. I am a believer that we women wear so many hats—career woman, homemaker, wife, mother. There are so many dimensions to a woman that you cannot restrict her to one title. So you have the same old me, in the same funky clothes."

All clothes and accessories by Laundry by Shelli Segal, Jessica, Episode, DKNY and Calvin Klein are exclusively distributed by Stores Specialists Inc. Debenhams and Marks & Spencer are exclusively distributed by Rustan Marketing Specialty Inc.

SHEER yellow top by CK, blue capri trousers by Jessica, maroon stilettos by DKNY and accessories by Debenhams

CREAM eyelet dress by Jessica and beaded necklace by DKNY

Two-of-a-kind moms

ACTRESS Maritoni Fernandez and son Liam: "As a mother, I never take for granted important moments. I relish their firsts and I don't let five minutes pass without saying 'I love you' to them."

THIS MOTHER'S DAY, METROBANK CARD Corporation salutes two moms who best exemplify unconditional love—Olympiad and television personality Christine Jacob-Sandejas and actress and entrepreneur Maritoni Fernandez.

A full-time career as a popular TV host was something Christine Jacob-Sandejas decided to give up without hesitation when she got married and had children.

Now blessed with three kids—Paolo Antonio, 5; Gabby, 4; Nina, 2; plus another boy on the way—Christine is a full-time mom who couldn't ask for more.

"My son is very *malambing*," she describes her firstborn. "My youngest Nina is so independent that she doesn't want anybody to help her in anything. And my little girl Gabby knows what she wants. She can really put her foot down and she'll do it. And they're all very friendly. I'm lucky in that aspect."

Christine's kids also excel in extracurricular activities. Paolo plays tennis, baseball, golf, and even joins swimming competitions, while Gabby also enjoys tennis and ballet. And Nina, at age 2, is already water-safe!

Affirmations of a job well-done come with simple gestures. For instance, Gabby likes making cards for her mom. One time, too, Paolo said something to his mom that was probably the sweetest thing Christine had ever heard. "Mom, you really love your kids, don't you?" her firstborn asked. Christine couldn't help but melt.

With moments like these, Christine doesn't regret her decision to choose family life over career.

Actress Maritoni Fernandez may appear to be a tough character especially with the villain roles she essays on film and television.

But outside show biz, Maritoni is nothing like the characters she plays. She is warm, real and caring, and makes killer broccoli soup and mouthwatering cheesecake.

Her battle with cancer is no secret to the public, so Maritoni is thankful every day for her second chance at life. Five years after beating the disease, Maritoni is now blessed with kids Alexi, 12, and Liam, 1.

"I live each day with a lot of enthusiasm, love and passion," she states. "As a mother, I never take for granted important moments. I relish their firsts and I don't even pass five minutes without saying 'I love you' to them. We go shopping together. We eat out. We play board and computer games together. Time and bonding are very important."

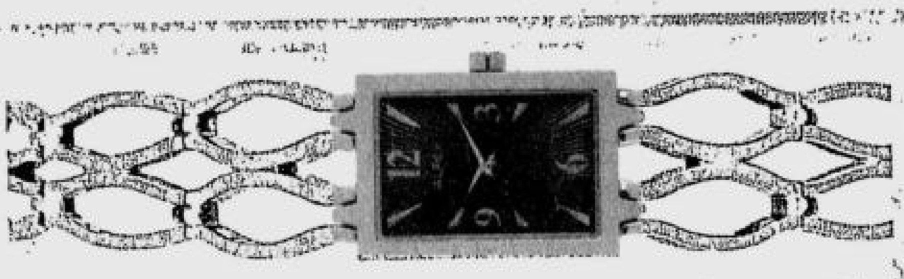
"God has blessed me back a millionfold with how extremely lucky I am with Alexi and Liam. They're the ones that make life truly worth living."

For bonding moments, enjoy shopping, dining and traveling with Metrobank Visa. With its worldwide acceptance benefit, it is the perfect companion that makes family moments even more magical.

CHRISTINE Jacob-Sandejas with son Paolo: "Paolo plays tennis, baseball, golf, and even joins swimming competitions."

The Metrobank Visa features flexible payment schemes, and since Metrobank has a vast branch network, bills are convenient to pay either in the nearest Metrobank brand near you or through Metrophone Banking, Metrobank direct or Bancnet ATMs. Also, enjoy the variety of rewards where every P20 charge automatically a reward point. The more you use your card, the more rewards in store for you!

What's more is that the Metrobank Visa has special 0-percent installment programs, cash advance options, and balance transfer facility that allows users to transfer non-Metrobank credit card outstanding balance to your Metrobank Credit Card at low, low interest rates per month at six, nine and 12 monthly terms. And, of course, avail of superior quality with a 24-hour, seven-days-a-week customer service.



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Time out for mom

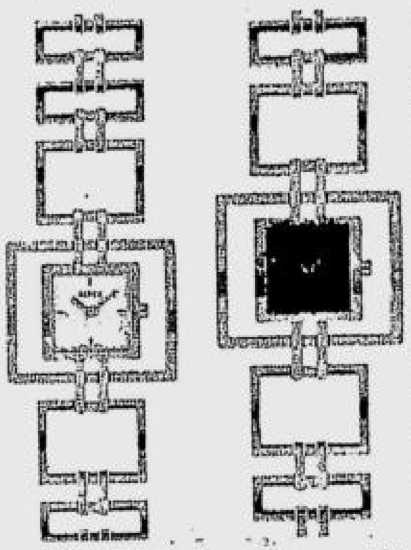
MOTHER'S DAY PRESENTS THE PERfect opportunity for you to make your mom look stylish again.

Watches make good gifts for mom, but buying her a watch that looks like everyone else's defeats the purpose of getting her something special for this occasion.

Time Depot is a haven for people searching for varied watch collections. Watches offered here are ideal for moms because they are classy but can keep up with busy lifestyles.

Alfex watches are top choices for fashionable moms because they exude feminine sophistication, like one in polished, stainless-steel casing and scratch-proof sapphire crystal face. They are products that can be mistaken for accessories but are, in fact, functional watches, perfect for use as trendy accessories and time-keeping devices. To complete the package, Alfex watches are very high-quality timepieces, so you are assured it will be with your mom for a long while.

Drop by any Time Depot stores in Rockwell, Makati; Robinsons Place Manila; Shangri-La Plaza Mall, Mandaluyong City; Festival Supermall, Alabang, Muntinlupa; Eastwood Citywalk 2, Libis, Quezon City; and SM branches in North Edsa Annex, Fairview and Pampanga.



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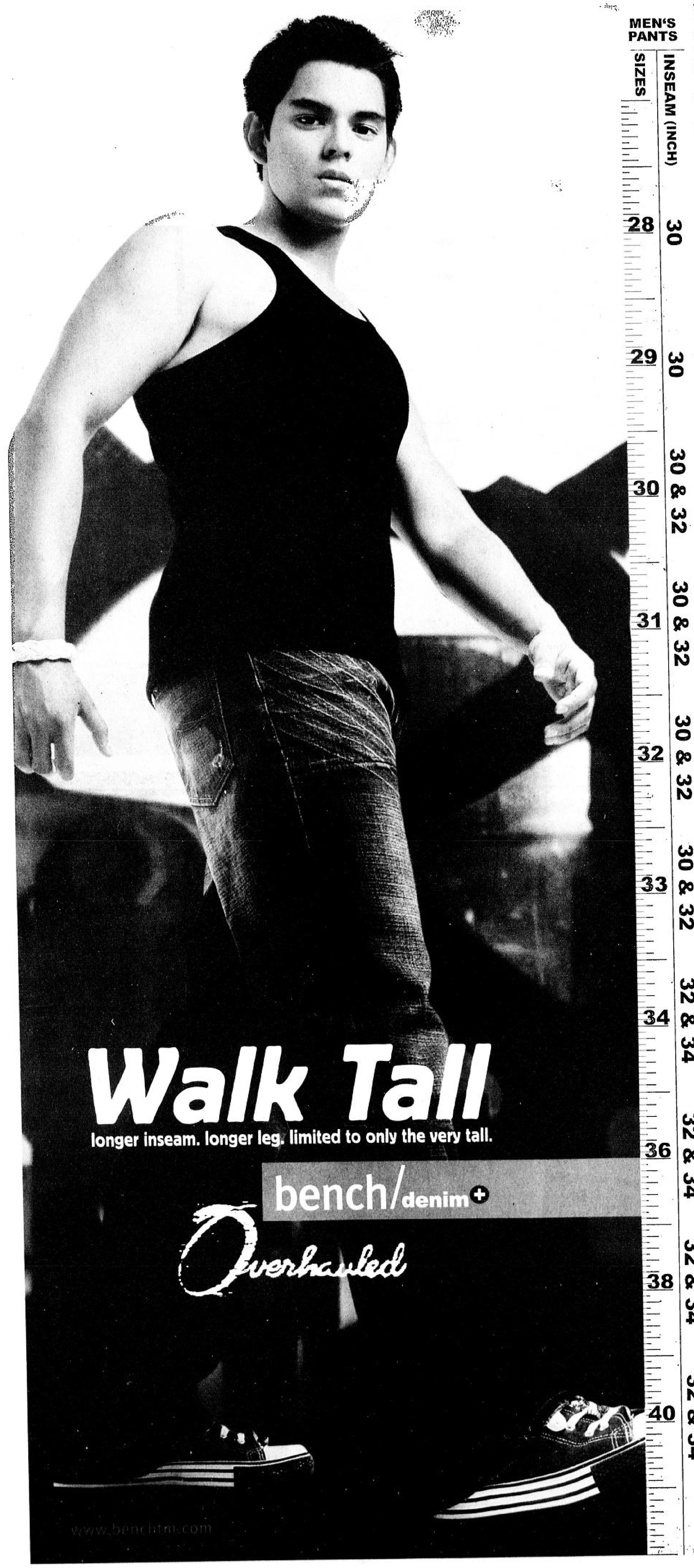
– This month on JUST SHOP...
domestic divas sweep
the home crowd wild
... and style tykes play dress up
in Just Shop for kids.

* JUST SHOP Magazine is out every first Friday of the month and it's given FREE to Inquirer subcribers in Metro Manila. If you want to be a subscriber call 528-0183 or 527-3348.



Marketing conference May 18-19

THE NATIONAL MARKETING CONFERENCE (NMC) organized by the Philippine Marketing Association (PMA) will be held May 18-19 at Hotel Philippine Plaza. Theme of this year's conference is All That Jazz: World-Class Innovations. A panel discussion, "Creativity across Borders," features three non-marketing creative experts: Ed Calma of Lor Calma Design, Ariel Manuel of Lolo Dad's and Rajo Laurel of House of Laurel. It will be hosted by JJ Roces, professor at the Asian Institute of Management. Audie Gemora, president of Trumpets, will talk about "How to Sell Your Ideas." Regular conference fee is P8,500. Call 6344890, 6345722 or 6361451, e-mail philmarketing@pldtdsl.net or visit www.philmarketing.com.ph.

GOINGS ON

CONCERTS. The San Miguel Philharmonic Orchestra (SMPO) and The San Miguel Master Chorale (SMMC) will hold concerts at the Grand Atrium of the Shangri-La Plaza, to be hosted by award-winning composer Maestro Ryan Cayabyab. The concerts are set on May 13 and 14, 7 p.m. The SMPO and conductor Arnel Feliciano are featured in "Fiesta de Mayo," an all-Filipino program on May 13. The SMMC will join the dynamic harmonies of The San Miguel Philharmonic Orchestra on May 14, under the baton of Eudenice Palaruan. The concerts are open to the public. Limited seats are available. Call 6337851 to 70.

GUITAR LESSONS. An easy guitar course will be conducted by pop-jazz musician Jaco Razon. The learning sessions will be held Tuesday and Friday, May 16-June 3, at Cambridge Child Development Center, 1 Capitol Hills Drive. Call 4754024.

MALL CELEBRATION. Sta. Lucia East celebrates its 15th anniversary. To highlight the celebration, there's the Little Mr. & Ms Sta. Lucia 2006 on May 13; summer fashion show on May 17, featuring Generation East 2006 finalists; May 24, a one-of-a-kind parade of gay beauties join the Gay Santacruzan and a special show at the Entertainment Center; May 25, Drum and Lyre Competition; May 26, Flores de Mayo featuring the finalists of this year's Generation East Search. Capping the activity is a grand anniversary concert featuring the country's top teen stars. On May 28, every P500 shopping receipt entitles customers to the "Name the Puzzle" promo with gift certificates and other prizes at stake.

MOTOR SHOW. The Automobile Association Philippines (AAP) celebrates its 75th anniversary. To highlight the celebration is the staging of its first-ever AAP Auto Show on May 12-14 at The Forum at the PICC.

REBATES. Citibank offers great deals on popular beachwear brands until May 31. Citibank credit cardholders can enjoy a 2-percent rebate with purchase of any regular or X items from Rustan's U's Beached, Beach Rays, Fartattu, Phax, Seafolly, U Swim, Wahine, Waicoco, Waigu, and Xoxo beachwear brands. This value offer is just one of the many perks for Citibank cardholders under Citibank World Privileges or CWP, a privilege program. Visit www.citibank.com.ph.

CONVENTION. The Parish Renewal Experience or PREX will have its 9th National PREX Convention on May 13 and 14 at Colegio San Agustin Gymnasium-Theater, Binan, Laguna. All PREX graduates are encouraged to participate. Call 9399542 or 9318111.

FOOD SEMINAR. MB&G/Proactive is now accepting reservations for the Managing a Restaurant/Canteen Seminar-Workshop and Catering Management Seminar-Workshop. Sessions start May 15, at the Ortigas Complex, Pasig City. Reservations are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. Call 8213583 or 0915-4315375.

FITNESS SESSIONS. Gymplus Fitness Center, with the Star Group of Malls, is offering summer courses in Ballet, Aikido, Arjumano, Karate, Muay Thai, Wushu and Taekwondo. Gymplus is open 10 a.m.-10 p.m. Visit Gymplus at 3/L of Metropolis Star Alabang (7721456) or at 3/L of Starmall Edsa-Shaw (7184059).

PAINTING WORKSHOP. Cecilia S. Angeles, painter, photographer and art professor, will conduct a four-day painting workshop, 9-12 a.m. and 1-5 p.m. every Monday and Tuesday. It is organized by the Federation of Philippine Photographers Foundation (FPPF). Sessions will be held at Fort Santiago, Intramuros, Manila. FPPF is on 7/F Comfoods Bldg., Sen. Gil Puyat Ave. cor. Chino Roces Ave., Makati City. Call 8137420, 8435241 and 8447769.

CONFERENCE. The Philippine Public Librarians League Inc. (PPLLI) will hold a national conference on "Librarians Competence for Success," May 23-25, at the Venus Park Hotel, Baguio City. Call 5280630 or 6466423.

EXHIBIT. Starmall Edsa presents Arts and Crafts exhibit at the 2/L, featuring unique items from various home decor and furnishing exporters. Call 7181886.

SANTACRUZAN FESTIVAL. Dumaguete City celebrates its Mayflower festival on May 27. There will be a parade on the main streets and the showdown at the City Hall Quadrangle.

BOOK FAIR. The 10th Philippine Academic Bookfair will be held July 10-14, 9a.m.-7p.m. at the PTA Tent, Clamshell 2, Intramuros, Manila. Call 9254572 or 09277968142.

SEMINAR-WORKSHOP. The Center for Learning and Teaching Styles Philippines will hold a seminar-workshop on "Creativity in Teaching," May 31-June 2 at the Teachers Camp, Baguio City. Call 4428877 to 78 or 4469866.